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# NATIONAL MUNICIPAL REVIEW

## CONTENTS FOR FEBRUARY

City Manager Government, Editorial ..... *Richard S. Childs* 50
Citizens' Councils Linked in National Federation, Editorial ..... *Howard P. Jones* 51
Who Are These City Managers? ..... *Orin F. Nolting* 54
Council Manager Cities During the Depression ..... *Geneva Seybold* 60
Does Good Government Stick: Reports from Pioneer Manager Cities ..... 67
New Adherents to the Manager Plan: How They Are Faring ..... *Howard P. Jones* 72
Cincinnati Keeps Its Lead ..... *Charles O. Rose* 76
Manager Government in Pennsylvania ..... *Robert M. Porter* 80
Black Sheep: The Story of the Abandonments of the Manager Plan ..... *Arthur W. Bromage* 85
Competent Citizenship: The Only Way to Good Government ..... *P. P. Womer* 92
Progress in City Management ..... 96
You and Your Government Program ..... 96
Bibliography on City Management ..... 97
News of the Month ..... 98
Recent Books Reviewed ..... 117

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Editorial Comment

February

NATIONAL MUNICIPAL REVIEW

Vol. XXV, No. 2 Total No. 236

# City Manager Government

"HAPPY is the land that has no history" and happy is the state of the realm of the city managers that a review of its recent years produces so little that is dramatic. For these were years to try men's souls and the widespread irritations and inflammations could as easily have wrecked the city manager movement as it has many another, but here we find business as usual.

Some twenty years ago I wrote for these columns an article entitled "How the City Manager Plan is Getting Along"—it was the first of these reviews —and the article opened, in the informal lingo with which I have always loved to annoy solemn editors, by saying, "It's getting along very nicely, thank you!" Then followed just such a series of anecdotes of success as comprise Miss Seybold's article in this issue. There have been plenty of peppy local fights and no doubt plenty of local drama here and there as indicated in the "Black Sheep" article. But really the news is no more or less than the material we carried in the League's pamphlet, "Story of the City Manager Plan," as long ago as 1917 except for a change of names and dates!

The news is in the list of calamities that have *not* happened! To wit:

1. There is no visible wearing out of the new broom—it still sweeps clean now after the plan has lost its novelty and after a new generation has grown up with it in many cities. The stories of lowered taxes, reduced debts, lower death rates, purchasing economies have not thinned out!

2. The managers are the same type of animal as the pioneers of their fraternity of two decades ago—a deadly earnest, practical lot. And still uncorrupted and incorruptible as a matter of course. And, alas, a bit unimaginative —they do not see visions—and the improvements in municipal technique come to them still from academic outsiders to be eagerly scrutinized and accepted on their merits.

3. The charters are unchanged and unchanging. Proportional representation has been hooked on in a few cases but otherwise no news, no tendencies, no agitation for further evolving toward still newer forms! We used to say, "This is the final reform in municipal structure, so far as we can now see," and time continues to justify us. It is nice to think that reformers can call something finished and leave it alone thereafter! It is years since the League has thought it worthwhile to discuss forms of municipal government and in all the city manager towns there are no essential variations in the form to overhaul in this issue!

4. As a measure of reform the plan has not gone the way of all flesh to corruption—the politicians have not come back after a few years to engulf the new administrations after the freshness of public interest wore off, as the cynics of yesterday used to tell us they would. There are instances, of course, but they are the odd cases, the inevitable exceptions—the general sweep of clean progress is an almost uncontested fact. The burden of proof is on the obstructionist.

5. The plan is merely seasoned by defeats, by reversions, by the battles for retention, and by what business men describe as "the habit of success." It can't be hurt now by what anybody may say or by any error a manager may commit. It is safely ensconced as a feature of the American scene and there are young married people now living under it who have no recollection of any other form of government. Which must make it harder for dogmatic opponents to call it "un-American." They cannot even call it a novelty!

I may therefore venture to predict that if a city manager number of this REVIEW is projected again five years from now, it will read just like this issue—new faces, names, dates, places, but astonishingly free from drama and surprise and new tendencies! Except for spreading the plan to the other 80 per cent of our cities, the job is done!

By the job I mean the mechanistic reorganization. We have aimed at nothing else in the campaign. The difficulties of democracy in this country have been mechanistic rather than moral, and capable of a mechanistic solution. That is a staggering statement to some, but the experience of the city manager plan proves it. The people of Cincinnati were the same under Hynicka's smutty despotism as in the bright years since. In city after city a new era came with no other change than the new structure of government—and the new courage of a people emerging from a jungle ambush to an open plain more suited to mass strategy and amateur leaders. The preachers who tell corrupt cities that the people are steeped in sin are the descendants of those who used to associate sin and plagues!

Now that the mechanics are made right, the morals of the people may be improved if you like. There's room for improvement, of course, always. You attend to that—I'm busy!

RICHARD S. CHILDS

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## Citizens' Councils Linked in National Federation

WITH the final appointments of members of the executive board made during December, a national federation of citizens' councils, to be conducted as an integral part of National Municipal League activity and to be entitled the Citizens' Council Section of the National Municipal League, is well under way. These appointments were Herbert Hoover, Ex-President of the United States, Palo Alto; Newton D. Baker, Secretary of War under President Wilson, Cleveland; and J. W. Clise, Jr., president of the Asbestos Supply Company, Seattle.

Dr. P. P. Womer, president emeritus of Washburn College, head of the Department of Citizenship in that college and organizer of the Citizens' Council of Topeka, Kansas, was appointed by the Council of the National Municipal League to serve as chairman of the executive board which consists of nine members. Two other appointments were made by the League Council—Frank C. Moore, counsel to the Asso-

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ciation of Towns of the State of New York, Kenmore, New York, and Robert M. Goodrich, executive director of the Providence Governmental Research Bureau, Providence, Rhode Island.

As provided in the constitution of the new section, at the National Conference on Government in November, delegates of citizens' councils appointed three executive board members as follows: Alonzo G. Grace, assistant professor of education, University of Rochester; William P. Lovett, executive secretary of the Detroit Citizens' League; and Arthur Barnhart, chairman of the Chicago United Citizens' Council. The members appointed by the League Council and the citizens' council delegates appointed jointly the remaining three members of the executive board.

The plan of federation is the culmination of the desire on the part of citizens' councils scattered throughout the country to keep more closely in touch with one another and to have some method whereby they may exchange experiences, devise plans for joint action when such is needed and assist citizen groups wishing to form similar councils. Because of the part that the National Municipal League had played in projecting and fostering the citizens' council movement, it was thought more logical and promising to associate the federation with the League than to project a new independent national organization.

The National Municipal League became interested in citizens' councils in the spring of 1932 when it joined with fifty-six other national organizations in encouraging the formation of such citizen groups and was chosen by these organizations to serve as a clearing house for the councils' activities.

The citizens' council idea was devised as a result of a conference called in the early part of that year by the President of the United States to consider the crisis in education. The pinch of the depression was causing a slashing of local governmental budgets extremely disastrous to education. Schools were being closed — children unfortunate enough to be of school age during a financial crisis were being deprived of educational opportunities which every American citizen had come to regard as his right. Not only were educational budgets being cut but also those for the maintenance of libraries, public health services, recreation and other social and cultural activities—services tremendously important to the welfare of the community. If public opinion could be mobilized, the conference believed, if public officials struggling to bridge the constantly widening gap between dwindling income and greater demands upon local government might have the help of concerned and thinking citizens, economies might be worked out which would be constructive rather than destructive in their nature and enable the preservation of the essential services of government. Thus was devised the plan of citizens' councils, made up of one or two representatives of every outstanding organization in a community, obtaining a representative group and providing a clearing house for civic activity. The council would be nonpartisan; its function would be to study the problems of local government, create informed public opinion in regard to those problems and coöperate with local officials in solving them—in brief, to develop more competent and intelligent citizen action.

A committee of the National Municipal League was formed to promote the plan and help local groups. Dr. Thomas H. Reed, chairman of the American Political Science Association's Committee on Policy, served as chairman. The vice-chairmen were Harold S. Buttenheim, editor of the *American City*; Dr. C. R. Mann, director of the American Council on Education, Washington, D. C.; and Carl H. Milam, secretary of the

American Library Association, Chicago. Other members of the executive committee were Mrs. Hugh Bradford, president of the National Conference of Parents and Teachers; Louis Brownlow, director of the Public Administration Clearing House; Lee F. Hanmer, Department of Recreation of the Russell Sage Foundation; Mrs. Charles Cary Rumsey; Mrs. F. Louis Slade and Miss Belle Sherwin, president of the National League of Women Voters. Howard P. Jones, secretary of the National Municipal League, was director and the other members of the committee were representatives of the fifty-seven national organizations interested in the program.

With the aid of the press and a nation-wide radio hook-up and publicity through the national organizations backing the movement, the plan was soon broadcast and within a comparatively short time councils were set up in communities in thirty-three states. In addition to the councils in cities and villages, county councils were formed and in Alabama and New Jersey state citizens' councils were organized. In New York a state committee was formed to relate the work of the local groups.

The local groups were autonomous. While most called themselves citizens' councils, many adopted other names—good government associations, civic associations, taxpayers' leagues or councils. Taxpayers' associations coming within the citizen council category, however, differed from the ordinary taxpayers' organization in their make-up. They were made up of representatives of organizations rather than individual taxpayers and always emphasized the viewpoint of community interest as opposed to the interest of any one group.

The value of having a small group representing a cross-section of community interest was soon demonstrated. The councils served their primary purpose of studying local governmental budgets, evaluating services, and recommending economies. Some tackled tax delinquency and other taxation problems. Some worked for new city or county charters. Many were consulted by public officials in determining which of several possible projects were most needed by the community when the city asked the federal government for PWA grants. Several brought about traffic reforms, the reorganization of the lower courts, drove nuisances from the community, and obtained local improvements. The citizen who had taken little part before in government other than going to the polls, if he did that much, through the citizens' council was given a mode of active participation.

The first months of the extension of the citizens' council program were financed by a grant from the Carnegie Foundation. After that the Committee of the National Municipal League continued to give what assistance it could through correspondence although there were no funds for sending speakers to help local groups with the preliminary stages of organization or consultants to help them with specific problems. The organization of councils continued through the plan's own momentum. A city forms a council because a successful one is functioning in a city nearby.

At the National Conference on Government held in Pittsburgh in 1934, representatives of citizens' councils passed a resolution recommending that a committee representative of citizens' councils and the National Municipal League be appointed to work out a plan for a national federation of the citizens' councils then organized and for the active promotion of similar organizations. The committee appointed in accordance with the resolution consisted of Dr. P. P. Womer, Lee F. Hanmer, Dr. R. A. Kent, President of the University of

(Continued on Page 59)

# Who Are These City Managers?

**"The rise of the city manager is not a political phenomenon. It is merely the manifestation in local government of the increasing technological revolution — the replacement of the amateur by the technician."**

ORIN F. NOLTING *Assistant Director, International City Managers' Association*

THE city manager parks his car in the rear of the city hall a few minutes before eight o'clock. On his way to the office he is waylaid five or ten minutes in the corridors by persons seeking an interview. Arriving, he finds his secretary in the outer office and in the office adjoining is his assistant, who may also act as purchasing agent and perhaps budget officer. On his desk (in the smaller cities) the manager finds purchase orders from the previous day, which he begins to check, inquiring of his assistant as to the need or reason for certain purchases, holding up some of them for further investigation. While the manager is engaged in this work, the city clerk comes in to discuss items to be considered at the next council meeting. Before the city clerk leaves, the manager asks him to obtain information on several matters on which the manager must report to the council. This done, the manager looks over five more purchase orders, and in comes the city engineer with plans for widening and improving King Street. The manager advises him to consult with the city attorney, city planning secretary, public works director, and finance officer about various aspects of the work—condemnation proceedings, type of paving to use, possibility of making it a WPA project, prospect of federal aid funds from the state highway commission, etc. The manager marks his calendar for a meeting the next day with these department heads to discuss different aspects of the problem—all preparatory to submitting a further report to the council.

It is now about nine o'clock, and the manager looks over the morning mail, indicating to his assistant and his secretary what disposition is to be made of each matter and dictating replies to letters which require his personal attention. From the talk in the outer office the manager knows there are a number of people waiting to see him. Those who have appointments see the manager first. There are two women representing a garden club who want the city to set out trees and shrubbery in a small parkway in which the club is interested. Next, a delegation from the city market requests certain changes in hours and methods of operation. A couple complains of not receiving sufficient relief. A young man wants to get on the police force. A homeowner requests certain street improvements.

A county official inquires of the manager as to what arrangements can be made to provide certain outlying areas with fire protection. A citizen who says he was sent in by a councilman to ask about a job is firmly but politely told that councilmen have nothing whatever to do with appointments and that he must file his application with the director of personnel. All callers are courteously treated and each matter is disposed of

either by calling in another official, by dictating a memo to the proper department, or by explaining why the request cannot be granted. In the meantime the business of other callers has been cared for by the secretary or by the manager's assistant.

It being early in the first month of the year, the manager talks with his assistant about certain features of the annual municipal report which is being prepared for distribution to citizens in February. Again turning to his desk, the manager finds several departmental reports indicating the progress made on the work program during the past month and accumulative reports for the year. The budget control report showing expenditures by departments, unexpended balances, and other finance data for the past year is of special concern to the manager. A brief conference is held with the chief finance officer and other department heads to discuss the new budget allotment program for the year just beginning and its relation to the work program. With a few minutes left before luncheon the manager dictates several memos to department heads on the work program and a tentative draft of a report to the council on the provision of fire defense services in outlying districts. This is sent to the fire chief for his comment and suggestions.

It is now nearly twelve o'clock and the manager hurries out the side door to keep a luncheon appointment with certain leading city, county, and state police officers to discuss the matter of coördinating police radio, establishing a training school, and reducing traffic accidents. Returning to the office about one-thirty o'clock, the manager gives his daily interview to the press, handing them several special releases prepared by different departments. He approves the copy for a small leaflet, prepared by his assistant and the finance officer, showing how the tax dollar is spent, to be sent out with tax bills. He accepts an invitation to make a radio address over a local station one night next week. He refers to the mayor an invitation to make an address of welcome at a convention. He prepares a report to the council on the police radio, training, and traffic situation and dictates the agenda for the next council meeting. Next, the manager goes down the hall to the city attorney's office to discuss with him certain provisions of the proposed bus regulation ordinance. Returning to his office, he approves the action of the police chief in dismissing from the service an officer who was drunk while on duty. At about two-thirty the manager goes out with the city engineer on an inspection trip, to go over the widening of King Street and inspect several other matters referred to the manager by the city council and which require personal inspection on the ground.

Back in the office an hour or so later, he finds several people waiting to see him. Soon it is four-thirty, and the manager approves more work orders prepared by his assistant, with whom he also discusses matters requiring attention the next day and at the same time signing letters. It is five o'clock but on one corner of his desk is a stack of municipal journals and pamphlets. He spends fifteen or twenty minutes looking through this material, marking articles here and there for the attention of various department heads. A few journals which he wants to read more carefully he takes home.

During the day the manager's secretary has saved much of his time by handling directly many of the complaints and requests, especially telephone calls, of which about forty-five were received, although half of the callers insisted on talking to the manager. The assistant also received eight persons applying for work and fifteen requisitions for sup-

plies and materials, and filled out a questionnaire for someone desiring specific information on how council-manager government operates. In analyzing his eight-hour day, the manager finds he has spent two hours interviewing callers, one and one-half hours inspecting outside activities, one and one-half hours planning present activities and future work, another hour and a half in conferences, fifty minutes in preparing official reports, and forty minutes in handling correspondence.

This composite picture of the city manager is based on first-hand observation and on reports from several hundred managers on how they spend their time. It indicates the variety of the city manager's duties—his relation to the council, the public, and the press, directing and coördinating the work of the departments, and his responsibility for seeing the community as a whole in its relationships to private agencies within the city and to other governmental units.

The difficulty of the city manager's job varies greatly from city to city. One might suppose that a small town would be easier to manage than a large city, but opinion on this point is far from unanimous. In most small cities—say less than 15,000—the manager must of necessity assume immediate direction of many administrative functions. He sometimes holds as many as five positions, including perhaps those of finance officer, city engineer, water works superintendent, electric plant manager, and secretary of the planning commission. His problem is one of operation rather than management.

In the larger cities, however, especially those over 100,000, the duties of the manager are confined to the broader questions of administration. This is made possible by the existence of several well defined departments with heads, more or less specialists in their respective fields, working under the direction of the manager. His job is no sinecure in any town; it is nerve-racking work which requires sound thinking and direct action.

### WHERE THEY COME FROM

But what sort of persons are these city managers? Where do they come from? A total of 1,490 men have held or are now holding city manager positions, since the appointment of the first manager at Staunton, Virginia, in January 1908. Of this number, 451 are now in active service (total manager cities and counties, 465). A detailed analysis of the 629 city managers who were active in the profession at some time during the three years 1931 to 1933, inclusive, shows an age distribution from 24 to 69, with an average age of 47. The age at which managers most frequently receive their first appointment is 37.

While two out of three attended college, only one graduated. It is significant that three-fourths of these managers had held governmental positions, generally a public administrative position, at some time prior to becoming city manager, and public service was the predominant occupation for 42 per cent before entering the manager profession. Moreover, 52 per cent came directly from some public position, one in five from private engineering, and one in four from the professions and business.

City managers are not tied, as every mayor is tied, to a single city. There have been 228 promotions from one city to another. Of the 101 cities and counties which have adopted the manager plan since 1929, about three-fourths of these appointed experienced out-of-town men as their first manager.

Seventy-three city managers are serving in their second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, or seventh city. Nearly one in four of the city managers now in active service has been in the profession for ten years or more and the average length

of service for all managers is slightly under six years, including all cities served. The annual turnover is about 15 per cent, but approximately one-half of the city managers who left their positions in the last two years have been appointed to federal, state, county, or city positions of an administrative nature.

So much for those who must have their statistics. It is hazardous to attempt to characterize city managers as a class, but if a generalization can be made it is this: There is an increasing tendency for cities to appoint as managers men who have had previous public administrative experience, and in recent years the number coming from occupations other than engineering is growing.

### A PROFESSIONAL GROUP

City managers are achieving a definite professional status in the public service. As individuals they possess the attributes of a professional man, as indicated by the high individual responsibility of the position, by a standard of conduct motivated by a desire for service, by a willingness to share their professional knowledge, and by guarding the standards and ideals of their profession in following a code of ethics. Almost without exception city managers carry out the spirit as well as the letter of their code of ethics by refusing to participate in council elections in which politicians attempt to make them an issue. One observer, Thomas H. Reed of the University of Michigan, in 1930 said, "While city government in many cities has been receiving more unfavorable publicity than for a generation, not a single serious charge of corruption or conspicuous failure has attached itself to any city manager."

Their professional knowledge is shared with others through articles in *Public Management* and through the annual conferences of the International City Managers' Association. There is also a fairly well developed body of knowledge on public administrative techniques, based to a large extent on the practices developed by city managers in such matters as budget control, unit cost records, reporting to citizens, centralized purchasing, and so on. City managers have long shown a constructive interest in the training of young men qualified to fill their places.

In addition to a standing committee on training, their professional organization, the International City Managers' Association, has a standing committee on research, provides a limited consulting service, publishes *Public Management* and *The Municipal Year Book,* offers a series of extension courses in the field of municipal administration, and conducts an annual conference. Requirements for full membership in the association are: "Any person who is the administrative head of a municipality, appointed by its legislative body; who has served in that capacity for at least three years; and whose professional conduct conforms to the code of ethics of this association shall be eligible to membership. Graduation from a college or university of recognized standing or five years in a responsible public administrative position shall be considered equivalent to one year of active service." City managers with less than three years' service are eligible to associate membership. Membership is also open to non-managers under the classifications of affiliate, student, and sustaining.

While city managers have developed most of the recognized earmarks of a profession, a considerable number are parochial in their outlook and limited in their ambitions. But this is not unusual, as other professions also include men who apparently have no interest in their professional organization or aspirations to advance. The obligations of a profession are largely a matter of attitude or a state of mind known as

professional spirit resulting from common adherence to an ideal which puts service above individual gain.

Leonard D. White, who has visited many city managers in their offices and has written a book about them, says that "as a class they are honest with themselves and with the community they serve; they avoid the claptrap which still distinguishes some local politicians, and play for sound municipal administration with a candor and forthrightness which is most refreshing."

### WHAT THEY THINK ABOUT

A manager cannot always say what he thinks; he must use more tact and discretion than is required of the head of the largest business enterprise in the city. But the chief concern here is, what do managers talk about when they come together? Of course the best place to see and hear them is at the annual conferences of the International City Managers' Association.

Prior to the World War, the annual conferences of city managers centered largely on discussions of material things, such as methods of pavement construction and planning of public buildings. In the next stage of growth beginning about 1921, their attention was concentrated on the establishment of sound budgetary and accounting procedures, centralized purchasing, and similar problems. With the coming of the depression they applied their energies to the difficult task of further constructive reduction of municipal expenditures. In recent years city managers have entered another period of growth in which they are concerned with the problem of continuously providing essential municipal services, becoming more and more concerned with the welfare of the people, and as Louis Brownlow has pointed out, their present task is to relate materials and money more intimately to the daily life and well-being of the individual citizen.

As city managers look to the future, they see another period of growth in which greater recognition must be given to the needs for a non-political personnel in all branches of the municipal service on a career basis, trained in techniques and procedures of management. They also foresee a greater emphasis on social welfare activities.

A total of 106 city managers attended the 1935 annual conference of their Association at Knoxville. Said one outside observer: "City managers come to the conference bent on learning something; apparently, however, it is a fresh surprise to the newspaper men in each conference city." The Knoxville papers, recalling a recent convention of another group of public employees which was more like a round-up of a fraternal group, commented on the earnestness and regularity with which the managers met and the high intellectual plane of the discussions.

The chief concern of city managers was ways and means of improving the administration of municipal services. They wanted to know what other cities have done in solving various problems and what sound practice indicates should be done. For example, these city managers talked about effective methods of collecting delinquent taxes, measuring the effectiveness of departmental operations, sources of revenue that might be further developed, how to develop organizational leadership among department heads, improving traffic control to reduce accidents, and the extent to which cities should charge for special services such as garbage collection.

They were interested at Knoxville in effective methods of selling city activities to the public and the extent to which city managers should promote civic organizations for good government. Of considerable concern also were numerous personnel problems such as procedure in restoring salary and wage cuts, training

employees on the job, and "welfare" activities for employees. One-half day was devoted to the problems of the city manager profession. To what extent should the manager participate in policy determination? What should be the manager's attitude when opposed by a council majority? How can a manager maintain a working relationship with the council?

While concerned mainly with the techniques of administering activities, a new interest which has developed at recent conferences is that of ways and means of coöperating with other local government units in solving problems which affect an entire area. A number of new and interesting arrangements along this line were reported. The city's part in the economic and social development of the region was a new subject which had not been discussed at any previous conference. Also, at the session on federal-state-city relations, which has been discussed at conferences since 1931, there was much concern not only about the administration of various federal programs but also as to what part cities would be expected to play after PWA and WPA ended. Those who have attended conferences for eight or ten years are impressed therefore with the gradually increased interest in the techniques of administration and also more lately with the attention given to relationships with other governmental units, as compared to the early concern with details of operation.

The rise of the city manager, therefore, is not a political phenomenon in itself. It is merely the manifestation in local government of the increasing technological revolution—the replacement of the amateur by the technician. It is coming to be recognized that there is a technique of administration, a problem of management and the coördination of the several functions and activities of local government, of integrated responsibility for the administration as a whole.

The work of government has been increasing and will continue to grow. Municipal administrators are coming to realize that an isolationist municipal policy is suicidal—that problems of an individual city are part and parcel of state and even national programs. Administration must therefore be as broad in its outlook as the problems which it undertakes to solve. This calls for technically trained, experienced administrators.

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## CITIZENS' COUNCILS

(Continued from Page 53)

Louisville, Carl H. Milam, and Dr. Alonzo G. Grace. During last year this committee worked out a plan of federation which was submitted to citizens' council delegates at the 1935 Conference on Government at Providence.

Councils will join the federation under a plan of group membership and there is also provision for individual supporting members. Junior citizens' councils which have been formed in a number of colleges will become members of the federation although on a different basis from the senior councils. The federation will coöperate with national organizations working in the field of adult political education.

H. P. J.

# Council-Manager Cities During the Depression

**Stories of skillful piloting through six stormy years**

GENEVA SEYBOLD

*National Municipal League*

MUNICIPAL reports of the last six years relate a story of the survival of the fittest. Scores of city governments during the depression added to the increased demand for red ink, meriting no more blame than the individual who in this trying period stumbled or sank under a load too heavy. All the world, however, loves a victor and thus accounts of cities that met difficulties in their stride are the most engrossing.

Sorting the success stories into a pile, one is immediately struck by the large proportion that relate to municipalities under the council-manager form of government. Can this be mere coincidence?

Consider in the upper right hand corner of the map the little town of Auburn, Maine, whose 18,000 population might well, for a while, have believed themselves a target for the thunderbolts of Jove. Dependent upon its industries, in 1931 the city lost through liquidation its large textile plant and two of its larger factories. Next year the first strike in the shoe industry in twenty-six years resulted in closed shops and a payroll loss of more than half a million dollars. And in the year after that a fire wiped out nearly a tenth of the city's total valuation and rendered homeless more than a ninth of the entire population.

Calamities such as these put a tremendous strain upon the local government. From 1929 to 1932 the assessed valuation was reduced by more than two million dollars and was further lowered by the fire. Income from taxes was greatly reduced and hundreds were added to the relief rolls.

Enough to make any city manager's hair turn gray, but read the record. The tax rate was kept constant at $26.00 per thousand for city purposes, a rate unchanged since 1926. At the end of 1934 the city's indebtedness was $31,000 less than it had been in 1929 although in the meantime a bond issue of $187,000 had been floated to replace buildings and equipment lost in the fire. All city services were maintained with only minor restrictions while buildings, equipment, and roads were kept in good repair. Auburn maintained a balanced budget.

Nearby is the city of Bangor which put its city manager plan into operation in 1932. During each of the three years previous the administration had spent more than the budget appropriations, unable to bridge the gap between dwindling income and demands upon government increasing in alarming fashion. The new administration at the outset courageously wrote off $100,000 of uncollectible taxes and bills formerly carried as assets. Assessed valuations were lowered and the tax rate raised slightly. At the end of the year there was a $10,000 surplus in the treasury. Next year while assessed valuations

were again lowered, the tax rate was reduced and there was a $28,000 surplus. In 1934 again the city's expenditures were less than the appropriations. Through policies of reorganization, consolidation, and the adoption of more efficient methods, the city's essential services were maintained and its credit built up. At the beginning of 1935 when other cities were having difficulty in borrowing money at 4.5 per cent, Bangor obtained a temporary loan of $700,000 at a rate of less than one-third of one per cent.

Binghamton, New York, industrial center, had an especially heavy relief load to carry, its expenditures for this purpose amounting to $664,000 in 1932 and $464,000 in 1933. One-third of this was financed from the budget and the remainder through short-term borrowings—three-year notes which were taken up in succeeding budgets or refunded. Yet the city was able to reduce its total indebtedness by nearly $483,000 in 1932 and 1933. In June 1934 Binghamton sold an issue of $190,000 in bonds at an interest rate of 1.75 per cent plus $40 premium.

### SAVINGS PASSED TO TAXPAYERS

In the first year of the manager plan the total expenditures for municipal purposes were nearly $303,000 less than the budget appropriation allowed by the council. In the first two years of the new administration the cost of local government was reduced 19 per cent, savings which were passed on to the taxpayer through lowering the assessed valuation and reducing the tax rate. Sewers were built, roads resurfaced, streets widened, buildings erected, and playgrounds opened. A police radio system was installed in 1933 and the health and hospital program expanded.

The net debt of the city of Norfolk, Virginia, was reduced approximately four million dollars during the three years 1931-1933 inclusive. In September of last year, with a cash surplus of between $700,000 and $800,000 indicated for the year, the council and city manager planned to reduce the tax rate for 1936 twenty cents per hundred, bringing it to $26.00 per thousand, and increase salaries of city employees by 10 per cent.

### CITY'S POCKETS FULL OF CASH

Tallahassee, Florida, ended the fiscal year of 1934-1935 with $390,000 in the bank and the auditor was audibly worrying lest the city react like "a man going about with his pockets full of loose cash" likely to spend more than is necessary and regret it later. This surplus remained in spite of the expenditure of thousands of dollars for a sewage disposal plant, an armory building, a baseball park, and numerous other public improvements. This city's income is greatly augmented by profits from its light, gas, and water plants.

East Cleveland, Ohio, has maintained a record beginning with 1918, the year when the council-manager plan was put into effect, of living within its income and ending each year with a balance in its general fund. Throughout the depression the city continued to meet all bills promptly, met bonds and interest when due without refunding, and paid all salaries without the issue of scrip. In the difficult years of 1929-1934 inclusive the city was able to continue all services in full and even added new ones. Taxes in 1935 were approximately one half of the amounts levied in 1930. In 1934 the city's general operating expenditures were 28 per cent less than in 1929.

Cincinnati reduced its gross bonded debt by more than ten million dollars during the years 1931-1935. During the depression years the city borrowed not a penny from the banks, issued no deficiency bonds, paid all of its current

bills and at the end of 1934 had paid off all the bonds issued for relief purposes in 1932. The tax rate for 1935, including city, county, and school, was reduced $4.58 per thousand from the rate of the previous year making the total $16.86—a rate lower than that of any city of comparable size in the country. The rate for city purposes was only $8.15.

### NEW SERVICES FOR CINCINNATI

In the years 1931-1935 when many communities despaired of finding funds to repair cracks in the pavement, Cincinnati was adding constantly to the number and quality of its services. A police radio system was installed, an advanced police school established, a homicide squad created, a crime laboratory set up, a medical-legal institute developed. A new and modern method of collecting and disposing garbage was inaugurated. A central purchasing department and a central inspection bureau were established. The number of playgrounds and community centers was more than doubled.

Piqua, another community in Ohio, paid all bills promptly and pointed to a balance in its bond retirement fund while other municipalities were defaulting in payments on their bonds and interest obligations. Residents of this little city who had acquired the habit of paying taxes promptly kept right on through the depression. In 1934 the percentage of collections was very nearly 97 per cent. Even in the leanest year, 1932, 93.71 per cent of the taxes were collected. One of Piqua's possessions is an $850,000 municipal electric light plant which was put into operation in 1933.

In the neighboring state of Kentucky is Lexington which adopted the manager plan in 1932. In the first year of the new administration the city reported the first cash balance it had had since 1915. The city more than met a 15 per cent decrease in revenue from 1931 to 1934 with a 16 per cent decrease in expenditures, while maintaining all important services. During these years the assessed valuation on real property decreased 5.2 per cent and the tax rate decreased 10.65 per cent from $26.20 per thousand to $23.40 per thousand. Here, too, tax delinquency has been no problem. In 1932, 97.3 per cent of the levy was collected and in 1933, 96.1 per cent. Since 1932 the city has installed a modern police radio, built and paid for a new central repair garage, serviced all city motor equipment, and taken over trash and garbage collections formerly handled by private contract.

While other communities in Cook County, Illinois, were closing schools, cutting employees' salaries drastically or not paying them, Winnetka operated on a cash basis without borrowing and loaned approximately $100,000 a year from its municipally-owned utility reserve funds to other taxing bodies. Expenditures for municipal operation in the five-year period 1919-1934 were decreased 22 per cent. One salary and wage cut was put into effect, a reduction of 8 per cent in 1932, but half of this was restored in 1934. Municipal license fees for motor vehicles were reduced about 40 per cent and free collection of garbage was instituted, making a total saving to the taxpayer of about 35 per cent below 1928-1929.

### PREPAREDNESS IN KALAMAZOO

Kalamazoo, Michigan, built up cash and invested reserves of more than half a million dollars during the depression. Operating on a pay-as-you-go policy for many years the city was within $5000 of being debt free in 1932. Then, anticipating the effects of a 15-mill overall tax limitation amendment about to be added to the state constitution, the city issued five-year emergency welfare bonds to finance the rapidly mounting

expenditures for relief, then a burden of local government. These were the first general obligation bonds to be issued in Kalamazoo since the institution of the commission-manager government in 1918. The courts held that home rule cities did not come under the provisions of the tax limitation amendment, thus excluding Kalamazoo, and soon the federal government began aiding municipalities in financing welfare work. Could this have been foreseen, the city might have continued its record unbroken. Taxes were reduced during the depression until in 1934 the total levy was 22 per cent less than in 1930 while services were maintained. A half-million-dollar city hall was completed in 1932 and paid for when finished.

### WEIGHTED WITH RELIEF LOAD

Two Rivers, Wisconsin, an industrial community, has carried during the last six years one of the largest relief loads of any city of its size in the state. In spite of this, the tax burden was lowered from year to year. In 1932 a new bridge and a fire station were constructed with no additional bonded indebtedness incurred. In the seven years that the city has had the manager form of government, its physical aspect has changed greatly—streets have been paved, buildings erected, an athletic bowl constructed, a baseball field laid out. The city's large recreational program was maintained in its entirety. During the whole of the depression the city operated on a cash basis.

Kenosha's portion of relief costs jumped from $49,000 in 1929 to $320,000 in 1933 and with no authority to issue bonds for relief purposes the city had to provide for this out of its current cash. More than a fifth of the taxes levied during the years 1930-1933 inclusive were delinquent and the city's share of income taxes fell from $590,000 in 1930 to $62,000 in 1934. In spite of this heavy loss in anticipated revenues and great drain on the treasury for relief, the city maintained its finances on a cash basis, carried on the usual services and reduced its net debt by $357,000. The tax burden was lowered each year from 1930 on. Improvements begun ten years before in a program of city planning continued uninterruptedly, financed out of current funds.

The state of Kansas attracted much comment at the time it passed its "cash basis" law in 1933. The city of Atchison, however, under council-manager administration, had been practicing the principle of this law twelve years prior to the time it was put into effect. In the thirteen years from 1922 to 1935 the city administration did a million dollars of improvement work, at the same time reducing the bonded indebtedness by more than a million dollars and also steadily reducing the tax levy.

No general property tax levy at all in Oklahoma City! During the depression, operating on a strictly cash basis, the city continued to lower its tax rate until in 1934-1935 the city manager announced that the revenue produced by the city water department plus miscellaneous revenues would be sufficient to run the city government. The operating expense of the city government in 1934 was a million dollars less than it had been two years previously.

### MORE PARKS IN OKLAHOMA CITY

The park area had been increased from 850 to 1320 acres and the city park attendance increased by nearly two million persons as supervised recreational programs were developed. The city health department maintained high standards and the city library circulation increased by more than 60,000. The city's per capita fire loss in 1933-1934 was one of the lowest in the country.

The yearly cost of operating the city government in Colorado Springs decreased 20 per cent during the years 1930-1933. The net bonded indebtedness was reduced by nearly a quarter and the property tax levy decreased 36.8 per cent. The city tax roll in 1934 was only 59 per cent of that for 1930.

### NO OVERDRAFTS IN AUSTIN

Since 1926 when the manager plan was put into effect in Austin, Texas, the city has not had an overdraft, has not issued a tax anticipation warrant, or resorted to emergency borrowings from banks. Each fiscal year has ended with an increasingly larger cash balance.

A bond issue floated in 1928 to finance much needed public improvements enabled the city during the depression to continue its building program. Streets, parks, playgrounds, a new public library, fire stations and a fire drill tower were built. A municipal airport, many miles of sewers, and a municipal slaughter house were constructed. The municipal electric plant was improved at a cost of $300,000 financed from departmental earnings. The capacity of the city hospital was doubled. Free trash and garbage collection was extended to all parts of the city. Practically every city department has been expanded.

The manager government taking effect in Dallas in 1931 faced not only depression problems but inherited a large overdraft incurred by previous administrations. At the end of three years this overdraft had been reduced and refunded, taxes had been lowered, and there was a $318,000 cash surplus in the treasury.

Improvement in the fire and police departments was especially marked. Better trained personnel, regular inspection and training of citizens in fire prevention reduced the total fire loss to $1,800,000 less than in the previous three-year period. A police radio system was installed and the average time of response to calls became two and one-half minutes as contrasted to the former thirty-minute average. Garbage collection was extended to a third more of the city's area with a saving of $100,000 in the yearly cost. Flood dangers were lessened with the installation of a comprehensive drainage plan. Improvements in the municipal airport made it one of the six best fields in the country.

Five new health centers were established. Recreation facilities were increased. More than 10,000 new books were added to the public library in 1934.

Assessed valuation of real property was cut 15 per cent from 1931 to 1934 while the tax rate remained constant, amounting to a reduction in taxes of $778,000. Reduction in the electric light and power rates and water rates made possible an additional annual saving of $450,000 to consumers.

### LOW TAX RATE IN BERKELEY

Another of those seeming paradoxes, a city with unusually low tax rate and exceptionally good government, is Berkeley on the Pacific Coast. To ease the tax burden the city government reduced the tax rate from $15.90 per thousand in 1931-1932 to $13.70 in 1933-1934 while the assessed valuations were reduced $11,000,000. The rate for 1934-1935 was further lowered to $13.60.

During the depression the cost of garbage collection and disposal was reduced and expenditures for street lighting lowered. The per capita fire loss of 18 cents in 1933-1934 was the lowest in the nation. The crime rate was 83 per cent lower than the average for the Pacific Coast cities. Health conditions were improved. The infant mortality rate in 1933 was two-thirds lower than

the average throughout the United States and communicable diseases at their lowest in fourteen years.

In 1933-1934 the citizens of Alameda, a neighboring city on San Francisco Bay, enjoyed the lowest tax rate in seventeen years, paying $13.50 per thousand of assessed valuation while an extensive program of civic improvement was carried on. In addition to the regular redemption of $47,000 that came due, the city cancelled bonds bearing maturity dates ten to twenty years in advance amounting to nearly $37,000. The city hall was rebuilt providing new headquarters for the police and an assembly room for civic meetings. The jail was modernized, all fire houses thoroughly renovated, new patrol cars purchased for the police department, the municipal golf course improved, a concrete seawall completed.

### NATION-WIDE SURVEYS STUDIED

The leap from specific example to general conclusion is always hazardous To determine whether there was any relationship between a city's form of government and the way in which it weathered the depression, the National Municipal League a few months ago went beyond the records of individual communities and studied nation-wide surveys of governmental services.[1]

Readers of the NATIONAL MUNICIPAL REVIEW are familiar with the tables prepared annually by C. E. Rightor in which the adjusted tax rates of cities are published according to population classifications. Segregating the manager cities from the rest, it was found that in every population class the average adjusted tax rate for council-manager cities for the year 1934 was less than the average for the cities with other forms of government. After five years of depression these cities were paying less for local governmental services than their neighbors.

The next step was to determine whether this lowered tax rate was at the cost of decreased services or a reduction in their quality. An analysis of the Uniform Crime Reports for the United States, compiled by the United States Department of Justice, disclosed that at the beginning of the depression in 1930 council-manager governments were policing their cities with much smaller forces than were supported in non-manager cities. In 1930 one more employee per 4,000 population was being hired to police the non-manager cities than in cities with managers. Both types of cities cut their police forces during the depression and in practically the same proportion so that in 1933 the manager cities were still maintaining order with fewer employees and much less expense (90 per cent of the expenditures for police departments are for personnel). A comparison of the records for robbery, burglary, and auto theft as indices of crime showed no outstanding difference in the two types of cities.

A survey made by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company in June 1934 of city health departments during the three years previous showed what services had been curtailed or eliminated, the extent of personnel losses, and gave information on reduction of salaries. Seventy-seven large cities were included in the survey embracing approximately half of the total urban population of the country. Fifteen of these were council-manager cities. Separating them from the whole it was learned that the manager cities during the depression cut their health department appropriations 7.5 per cent less than the average cut in the large cities in the

[1]See *Council-Manager Cities During the Depression,* 1935. For copies apply to National Municipal League, 309 E. 34th Street, New York City.

country. They began restoring services earlier and throughout the depression provided health services at less per capita cost.

To determine what had happened to recreational services the annual reports made to the National Recreational Association for the years 1930 and 1933 were compared. In 1934 the federal government began contributing money for local recreational projects so that the earlier year was chosen to study the effects of contracted municipal budgets.

### RECREATION EXPENDITURES COMPARED

Comparison of the expenditures for recreation of 97 council-manager cities and 479 non-manager cities in the same population range showed that in each case they had dropped approximately 50 per cent. The council-manager cities, however, throughout the period were devoting a much larger share of their budgets to recreation than the non-manager cities. The per capita expenditure in the council-manager cities in 1930 was 86 cents and this had been reduced to 43 cents in 1933. The per capita expenditure for recreation in the non-manager cities in 1930 was 51 cents and after the cut they were allowing only 26 cents per capita in 1933. The curtailment of expenditures in the council-manager cities was accomplished in such a manner that the total number of recreational facilities was reduced in only 42 per cent of the cities. More than half of the cities actually increased the number of playgrounds, community centers, athletic fields, and other recreational units during the period 1930-1933.

One other type of service was studied —library service—significant since at the beginning of the depression this was one of the first services to be curtailed. From annual reports made to the American Library Association in 1929 and 1933 by ten council-manager cities and thirty-five non-manager cities, each serving a population of from 80,000 to 600,000, it was found that the manager cities had cut library budgets 8.6 per cent less than the non-manager cities within this period. A more surprising fact was that at the end of four years of depression the manager cities were reserving more for libraries than the non-manager cities had before the depression set in.

The studies above indicated that manager cities had not achieved their lower tax rates at the expense of the social, educational, and cultural services. Since, deplorably, in cities as a whole these were the first to feel the governmental "economy" axe, it is not unfair to suppose that other services of local government were likewise maintained.

It is not a coincidence—the remarkable record of council manager cities during the depression. Good management is the keyword—good management the product of the council-manager form of government.

# Does Good Government Stick? Reports From Pioneer Manager Cities

**Proof of the pudding from the eaters thereof**

EDITOR'S NOTE.—The statements that follow have been secured from seven of the eight cities of over 10,000 population which had adopted the manager plan by the end of 1914. These cities are Staunton, Virginia, population 11,990 (1908); Sumter, South Carolina, population 11,780 (1912); Amarillo, Texas, population 43,132 (1913); Charlottesville, Virginia, population 15,245 (1913); Phoenix, Arizona, population 48,118 (1914); Glendale, California, population 62,736 (1914); and Dayton, Ohio, population 200,982 (1914). No report was received from Springfield, Ohio, population 68,743 (1914).

There has been some discussion as to whether Staunton or Sumter was actually the first city to use the manager plan. For this reason the following explanation may be in order at this point. The first municipal use of the title "manager" occurred in Staunton where, in 1908, the office of "general manager" was created and continued several years as a novel adjunct to an otherwise old-fashioned government consisting of a two-house city council and mayor. As will be seen by the statement of Mr. E. W. Opie below, Staunton later adopted a regulation manager charter by popular vote. This was not until 1920, six years after the adoption of a manager charter in Sumter.

Glendale, California, and Charlottesville, Virginia, also first used the manager plan by virtue of an ordinance of council, later adopting manager charters at the polls—Glendale in 1921 and Charlottesville in 1922. All of the cities listed are now operating under manager charters adopted by popular vote.

STAUNTON, VIRGINIA

"Does good government stick?"

It has in Staunton, Virginia, where the city manager plan was originated. It has had to go through several hot fights since the city manager idea was adopted in 1908, but each time the victory has been won by the forces of good government.

In 1920 Staunton took her city manager out of leading strings. Up to that time, he had been handicapped by a considerable limitation of authority, due to retention of the bicameral council when the city first decided to employ an executive. Meanwhile, other cities had adopted the manager plan and improved upon it, and the commonwealth of Virginia had recognized it in its code by providing several variations, any one of which a city or town could adopt by popular vote.

An election was called, and Staunton adopted the council-manager plan by a large majority. This plan replaced the unwieldy bicameral council with a body of five, elected at large instead of by wards. It fixed the manager's powers by statute instead of making him entirely the creature of the council, so that

he became the real executive head of the city's business. The merit system of making appointments replaced the political method.

Those who loved the old political game and some who oppose investing the manager with strong executive authority with little check by the council other than the power to discharge him, continued opposition to the council-manager plan. They managed to force another election in 1932, but were again defeated, following which they made a fight against incorporating the plan in the city charter when it was revised by the state's general assembly in order to bring the city's organic law up to date. That fight was also won by those backing the idea of managing the city's affairs on business rather than political principles, so it appears that the Staunton public really wants the manager type of government.

E. W. Opie, Editor
Staunton *News-Leader*

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SUMTER, SOUTH CAROLINA

The city of Sumter by vote of its citizens and under authority of an act of the general assembly of South Carolina, adopted in 1912 the commission form of government with a city manager. Sumter became the first city in the United States to adopt this particular form.

The commission consists of the mayor and two councilmen elected by the people for four-year terms, one of the councilmen being elected in alternate years, thus insuring at least one member of the council with two years or more experience. The salaries of the mayor and councilmen are small.

The council elects, to serve at its will, the city manager who is a full-time employee and who has charge of all the departments. The city manager has charge of the purchases of the city as well.

The work of the city is divided into a number of departments each with its head who is responsible to the manager for the operation of the department. We have the following: public works or street, trees and parks, water and sewer, police, police court, health, fire (all of the foregoing administrative); clerk and treasurer, tax collector, etc.

A budget is prepared each year and the departments operate under this budget which has to be a balanced one.

The system has worked with satisfaction in Sumter and I do not suppose many would vote for its abolishment.

I. M. Richardson, Secretary
Sumter Board of Trade

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CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA

Charlottesville had a city manager as early as 1913. This action was taken simply by a resolution of the council. The system did not apparently work so well because of the strong mayor-council system in effect. The manager was but an agent of the council. Legally, the city manager was not provided for by charter until 1922. This plan did not call for an out-and-out city manager system. To quote the charter provision, it was "a modified commission plan." All legislative, financial, and police powers were vested in the council. This council was given the duty of appointing a business manager in whose hands was vested full executive authority in the management of all ministerial affairs with the right to hire and fire all employees, "under his control." This was the joker in the pack. Many employees were and still are outside the manager's jurisdiction. Notwithstanding this condition, the results of the new system are worthy of some praise.

At the time the new plan went into effect the city was governed by a mayor-council type of government. There was a council composed of a common council and a board of aldermen. The common council had ten members and the board of aldermen four. Two members on the board of aldermen could and did

often tie up the whole city government. The system was noted for its inefficiency. Politics was the order of the day and efficient and economic administration was scarcely a faint hope.

The appointment of a business manager took away the bulk of political influences that dictated appointments to some of the city offices. The actual costs of administration remained very much the same, but the amount of services which the citizens received in return for the dollar spent was greatly increased. In 1922 the city had very few paved streets; only about 40 per cent of the city had the advantage of a modern sewage system. Today practically all of the streets in the city limits are paved, and 95 per cent of the city enjoys the benefits of a modern sewage system.

The tax rate has remained fairly high. A few years ago it had reached a peak of $2.85. This has now been reduced to $1.90. Of this latter figure the school budget alone takes eighty-seven cents. As is the case in a great many cities the school board of Charlottesville enjoys a somewhat independent status and this factor alone tends to take the control of school moneys out of the hands of the representatives of the people.

In conclusion, it might be said that the present form of government has produced pleasing results. No one would suggest going back to the mayor-council type. The only suggestion that one hears at all is that the manager should be given more power than he has. In practice he has gradually been assuming more powers than the legal phrases of the charter would suggest but as long as there are administrative officials popularly elected or otherwise chosen independently of the manager there still remains room for improvement.

RAYMOND UHL, Director
Bureau of Public Administration

PHOENIX, ARIZONA

Twenty-one years of city manager government in the city of Phoenix shows that the effectiveness of such management is only as great as the sincerity of the city commissioners who are in power permit or make it.

The people of Phoenix adopted the city commission-city manager plan in 1913 and it became effective in 1914. The charter provided that the manager should be the executive authority of the city and could only be removed for cause. Since that date the charter has been changed three times, in order to make the manager removable at the pleasure of the majority of the city commission or not, and in all these years and through all these changes the manager has practically never had an opportunity of actually running the city until the last eight months, during which time the majority of the city commission have been in entire accord and trying to give the city a strictly business administration.

When the citizens originally approved the manager plan the charter said, "The city manager shall be appointed by the city commission and shall hold his office until removed for cause by the commission."

The first manager chosen to fill the office believed that the charter meant just that, and immediately after his being placed in office there was disagreement between the commissioners and himself because he made it clear that he intended to use the full authority of the manager and not accept dictation from the commissioners. The result was that the commissioners removed him. The matter was taken to the Supreme Court of the state which held that, while he was properly removed, the charter provision meant what it said.

With the first battle a draw, the commissioners took the matter to the polls

and in 1915 succeeded in having an amendment approved by the voters that read, "The city manager shall be appointed by the city commission and shall hold his office until removed by a vote of three-fifths of the commission voting affirmatively therefor."

From that date down to December 1933, city managers came and went just as administrations changed and the commissioners decided they needed a manager who would follow their dictation as to patronage, purchases, and whatever else they decided in the administration of city affairs.

In December 1933 several amendments to the city charter were referred to the voters by the administration then in power. These amendments were designed to perpetuate the commissioners then in office for another year and a half and to permit them to name a city manager, if they should be defeated. This manager would be blameless for any acts of the previous administration.

The charter amendments were all defeated excepting the amendment affecting the term of office of the city manager. This amendment read, "The city manager shall be appointed by the commission and shall hold his office until removed for cause by the commission."

This was the same wording as the original charter provisions upheld by the Supreme Court rulings. The administration which attempted to perpetuate itself in office by the charter amendment was swept out of office in the following city election but just before leaving office it named a new city manager.

The incoming administration, elected on a ticket promising a strictly business administration, which I had the privilege to head as mayor, found itself effectively handcuffed in putting into effect any reforms because of the city manager placed in office by the outgoing administration, who could not be removed except for cause, and though we might have considered cause existed for his removal, he could delay that removal in the courts long enough to nullify any of our efforts at straightening out the affairs of the city. It was decided the only solution to the predicament was to again refer an amendment to the people, making the city manager removable by a three-fifths vote of the city commission.

This amendment was approved and became effective on November 1, 1934.

The first manager then named by my administration proved unfortunate because of political disaffection, and it was not until May 1, 1935, when the present city commissioners, elected to back me in my policies for administration of the city, took office and we were able to place our present city manager in office and give him full authority to run the city, that the city of Phoenix has had a real opportunity to judge whether a city manager form of government can be effective or not.

I believe the city manager form of government should work. However, as far as the city of Phoenix is concerned, we must get it into workable condition and give it a real try. I hope that we will be able to do just that.

Joseph S. Jenckes
Mayor

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AMARILLO, TEXAS

The city of Amarillo was truly a pioneer in the council-manager form of government in this section of the United States, being the first city in Texas to adopt this form of government and the fifth in the United States. The council-manager form of government was adopted at an election held November 18, 1913, and to my knowledge there has never been an attempt to repeal this form of government. Of course there have been at various times some amendments to our charter, but nothing that would indicate the citizenship were not satisfied with the manager form.

At the time the manager form of gov-

ernment was adopted Amarillo was a town of approximately 10,000 population and during the twenty-five years since that time it has grown to a city of some 50,000 population. I am the ninth city manager who has been employed by the city since the adoption of this form of government.

Amarillo's municipal development has at all times kept abreast with other forms of business development in our vicinity and I am sure as a whole the citizenship are well satisfied with the type of government we are now operating under.

H. R. Smith
City Manager

GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA

The city manager form of government has existed in Glendale, California, for approximately fifteen years.[1] The principal testimonial indicative of its success is the fact that there is no general expression of dissatisfaction with this form of government in our city, which is being conducted in a highly efficient manner, giving a maximum return in benefits to Glendale citizens for every dollar of their money expended.

Prior to the city manager form of government, the financial condition of this city was in difficult circumstances, but due to city manager supervision we have been able to build up a general reserve which has enabled us to maintain our city on a cash basis even in the face of the depression period through which we have just been passing. Of course had it not been for this reserve, it might have been necessary to have been compelled to go on a tax anticipation warrant basis which we were fortunate enough to evade.

Our city government is composed of a mayor who is chairman of the city council, and elected by the council, four other members of the council elected by the people, and a city manager elected by the city council. The city manager keeps the council advised of all needed improvements and makes his recommendations and reports direct to the city council at weekly meetings. He is also in charge of the sixteen departments which come under his supervision, and which are clearly defined in the city charter.

The success of any city manager form of government is "wise disbursements" and keeping well within the budget allotments each year.

In Glendale the city council gives the city manager its full coöperation, and in this way, everyone works in perfect harmony on all matters pertaining to the betterment of the city, and no matter how difficult are the conditions which we face, nor how burdensome is our load, the city of Glendale still continues to make progress and retain its past slogan as the "Fastest Growing City in the West."

William V. Anderson
City Manager

DAYTON, OHIO

For twenty-two years our city has operated under the manager plan, and in spite of recent financial difficulties due to the depression and consequent administrative gymnastics to cut city services to suit the cloth of city income, Dayton continues quietly and unobtrusively to furnish an example of sound government.

I do not mean to say that the majority of citizens realize how good our government is. When the income from the general property tax for the operating fund drops in four years from $1,700,000 to $600,000, and the city asks the voters for a deficiency bond issue,

(Continued on Page 79)

[1]Glendale's city manager charter was adopted in 1921. The office of city manager, however, was created by an ordinance of council on May 11, 1914.—Editor.

# New Adherents to the Manager Plan: How They Are Faring

**Hackensack and Wheeling among others report excellent results following adoption of plan.**

HOWARD P. JONES — *Secretary, National Municipal League*

TWENTY-EIGHT cities have adopted council-manager charters during the last three years. These cities are:

1933

Baileyville, Maine
Ellsworth, Maine
Presque Isle, Maine
South Portland, Maine
Asbury Park, New Jersey
Hackensack, New Jersey
Wilson, North Carolina

1934

Washburn, Maine
Clifton, New Jersey
Schenectady, New York
Toledo, Ohio
Washington Courthouse, Ohio
Limerick, Ireland

1935

Pittsburg, California
West Hartford, Connecticut
Harrington, Delaware
Ashland, Maine
Eastport, Maine
Grayling, Michigan
Rockford, Michigan
Saginaw, Michigan
Trenton, New Jersey
Sewickley Heights, Pennsylvania
Huron, South Dakota
North Troy, Vermont
Troy, Vermont
Orange, Virginia
Wheeling, West Virginia

It is a fair assumption that when a city changes its form of government during a depression period, it is a city which is in the midst of critical financial problems. The lavish expenditures of a prosperity era and the graft and corruption, "honest" or dishonest, that usually has accompanied such expenditures, is not a general characteristic of municipal government these days. The movement to reorganize a city government today is more than likely to have its *raison d'être* in the failure of the existing regime to cope adequately with the pressing problems of the period rather than in the lining of pockets on the part of those in control. As a matter of fact, there is comparatively little of the latter type of activity going on these days—much less, indeed, than the public is inclined to think.

A politician's life is no easy one today. He must take care of "the boys" and at the same time render far more service than ever before at less cost. This is no job for a politician and the mortality rate is high. The fact that more than twice as many cities adopted the city manager plan in 1935 as compared with either 1934 or 1933 presumably may have some significance in this connection.

"But do you *really* think that a change in our form of government will solve all these problems?" This is the query that comes from city after city and perhaps it can best be answered by reference to experience. What has happened in the cities listed above? While it would be obviously impossible to ex-

amine the records of all of them within the confines of a short article, a sampling may supply some helpful information.

### HACKENSACK, NEW JERSEY

Let us look first at the city of Hackensack, New Jersey.

"The city of Hackensack, which was on the verge of bankruptcy when City Manager Rich came here, is now substantially on a cash basis." J. W. Binder, executive of the Bergen County Chamber of Commerce thus crisply summarizes what business men of Hackensack think. The story behind that transformation in a two-year period runs approximately as follows:

Before the city manager plan went into effect in July 1933, the city had encountered rough financial sailing. In the spring of that year, Hackensack bonds were being offered at 58 with no takers. Taxes were high and the administration was inefficient. City officials, however, were "not political pirates in the accepted sense," according to Rossman H. Wynkoop, managing editor of the *Bergen Evening Record*. "They just didn't know what it was all about. Municipal positions were filled by political favorites without any regard to merit."

In July Wilder M. Rich, who had served as city manager in four cities—Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., Goldsboro, N. C., Alexandria, Va., and Ironwood, Mich. —was appointed to the new position in Hackensack. The first thing he did was to tackle costs of operation. Without curtailing any services whatever, he gradually brought the budget down until operations were costing approximately $100,000 less than in 1932. The next job was to solve the debt problem. When the city manager took office, there were temporary loan bonds outstanding to the amount of $2,408,000 maturing in the period from 1933 to 1938 with interest rates at 5½ and 6 per cent. The city manager developed a plan for refunding at reduced interest rates which was carried out without cost to the city except for the usual legal fees. Simultaneously, a "pay-as-you-go" policy was adopted with reference to current expenditures. Hackensack bonds are now selling on a 3.15 basis.

Evidence that the financial reorganization program of the city manager did not interfere with the satisfactory rendition of local services may be gathered from the fact that the Hackensack health department for the last two years has won first prize in its class in the national health contest.

Perhaps the most interesting comment with respect to the operation of the city manager plan in Hackensack, however, comes from C. H. Plenty, vice-president of the Hackensack Trust Company.

"Naturally conservative and through years of banking taught by experience to be cautious, I was not receptive to the proposal that the form of government in Hackensack be changed to the city manager type. Fearful of reformers and doubtful of all reform movements, I did all I could to defeat the proposed change. I felt sure a mistake had been made when the move was successful.

"I am glad to admit I was decidedly wrong and am now an ardent supporter of the policies of our present administration. The amount paid to the city manager in salary has been saved many times over, each year."

### TRENTON, NEW JERSEY

A somewhat similar story comes from another New Jersey city which has been operating under the plan for only six months. Debt again is a millstone around the neck of taxpayers from which there is no escape under the most efficient administration. Paul Morton, the city manager of Trenton, inherited a debt of $25,000,000 accumulated through years of profligate financial practices.

The new administration is aiming at ultimately wiping out this debt entirely, meanwhile operating city services on a pay-as-you-go basis.

One of the first acts of the new city manager was to conduct a tax collection drive. The result was that the city obtained tax revenues in excess of expenditures by approximately $300,000, thus saving substantial sums of money through obviating the necessity of issuing tax anticipation notes at a high rate of interest.

Through the elimination of positions which were not considered essential to the efficient functioning of the government, $63,000 a year was saved; and through efficiencies all along the line substantial items of saving have been effected. Thus, for instance, simply the centralization of telephone service will save more than $3000 a year, in addition to greatly improving the service rendered. Centralization of purchasing has removed the element of discrimination in the award of contracts and also has brought about a lower unit cost for all materials.

### MINOT, NORTH DAKOTA

Putting cities on a better business basis is ordinarily not packed with drama but it may hold much satisfaction for taxpayers, creditors, and employees. When J. W. Bliss became the first city manager of Minot, North Dakota, in May 1933, he found that payrolls were two months in arrears, light, power and material bills were from three to six months in arrears, and there was no available cash. Within a year the city had effected economies which enabled it to catch up completely and wind up the fiscal year June 30, 1934, with a cash surplus and all bills paid including those inherited from the previous administration. Since then the city has been on a strictly cash basis.

### WHEELING, WEST VIRGINIA

In Wheeling, W. Va., the new regime this year found that water meters were not being read at all, but merely "guessed at." In former years, according to Julian G. Hearne, Jr., of the Wheeling Association, thousands of dollars were being wasted in gasoline supplied to city employees for their own use. Now the city maintains a gasoline station for cars used on official business only. Large sums of money were lost through the old system of paying invoices without checking them against actual receipt of the goods by the city. This has all been eliminated. Nothing of a revolutionary nature is reported—simply sound business methods applied to the administration of city government.

### OTHER CITIES

Similar reports come from Clifton, N. J., and most of the other cities on the list. Schenectady has only had the manager plan since January 1, 1936, so there has been insufficient time to judge the result there. Election of a divided council in November, however, with the Charter League representatives in the minority, indicates the possibility of continued political interference in administration. In Toledo, on the other hand, the situation is reversed, and with the administration in the qualified hands of City Manager John N. Edy, Toledo ought to make a brilliant showing in improved government.

Any survey, however brief, of the accomplishments of manager governments cannot fail to stress that successes flow directly from having experienced and qualified men who know their business in charge. Wherever we turn, this is the case. The city manager plan succeeds or fails here.

How to ensure experienced and qualified men? The answer is of course a city council interested enough in doing

a good job so it will appoint a capable manager. And how to ensure such a council? There is only one way and the experience of hundreds of cities so testifies: an organization to select candidates and campaign for them after they are selected. The foundation of good government must be citizen interest and participation.

### CITIZEN ORGANIZATION

When the Wheeling Association was organized for the purpose of bringing better government to Wheeling, its leaders realized they were up against a tough proposition: defeating a political machine which had been in control for years and which had all the pressure of patronage and present possession of power. There was but one way to do it—develop an organization as thoroughgoing and vigorous for good government as the politicians had to keep themselves in office. This was done. A ward-precinct-block organization modelled after the Cincinnati City Charter Committee was built up with the result that the political machine was badly beaten and thoroughly demoralized.

If Wheeling is to retain good government for any length of time, the active organization of citizens which brought about good government in the first instance must fight to keep it in the second. There can be no lying down on the job, no sleeping sentinels. For good government makes mistakes and a liaison agency is essential to interpret what government is doing or trying to do to the public. If the mistakes are too frequent, the administration will get thrown out anyhow; the important thing is not to let the administration be condemned solely on the basis of its mistakes. A balance must be struck in the mind of the voter. He must know what is going on.

Wherever successful city government exists, will be found an alert organized citizenry. That is true in Cincinnati, it is true in Wheeling, it is true in Hackensack, it is true in Toledo, it is true in Dallas. There is no other way to make sure that representative citizens who are interested in good rather than bad government are elected to the council. There is nothing automatic about democracy. The citizen must play his part. If he does, the council can play its part, the city manager can play his part, the department heads can play theirs, and intelligent, responsive, efficient city government can result. With it all must go the realization that those interested in bad government are on the job all the time because they have everything to gain and nothing to lose. Everybody is interested in good government which is almost the same thing as saying nobody is. Some group must take the responsibility for full-time scrutiny and interpretation of government to the public.

All of which is merely saying that the city manager plan is no more automatic in its operation than is anything else that depends upon human beings. An astonishing proportion of cities that adopt the manager plan find what they were after: efficient and responsive local government. The examples given above of recent adoptions are neither exceptions nor exaggerations. On the other hand, there are a few Asbury Parks and Kansas Cities where, because the political gang controls the council, it also controls the manager and the spoils system goes merrily on. That such cities constitute but a small minority of those operating under the manager plan is the significant point.

Pope's famous couplet has probably done more to create fuzzy thinking among citizens on the subject of forms of government than any political slogan ever adopted. Men must run governments but to do so men must be organ-

(Continued on Page 79)

# Cincinnati Keeps Its Lead

**"Best governed large city in America" records new achievements: story told by official who saw city "before and after"**

CHARLES O. ROSE — *Former Councilman, Cincinnati, Ohio*

I HAVE been a member of the city council of Cincinnati continuously from January 1, 1916, to January 1, 1936, when I retired. I was the only member of the old large council to be elected to the new council and am therefore in a unique position to contrast the records of the two decades.

At January 1, 1916, the form of city government was the elective-mayor-large-council type. Council consisted of one member from each of twenty-six wards and six elected at large, total thirty-two. At January 1, 1926, an amended charter became effective, providing for a council of nine members, all elected at large every two years on a rotating birdless ballot, with the proportional representation system of counting the votes. Council *chooses* one of its members to be mayor, one to be vice-mayor, and *appoints* a city manager who is the chief executive and administrative officer.

During the last ten years a majority of the councilmen have been elected with the endorsement of the City Charter Committee, a nonpartisan and strictly municipal group. The minority have been elected with the endorsement of the Republican party. At the election last November, four Charter candidates, four Republican candidates, and one independent candidate were elected. Of the four Charter members, all are strictly Charter candidates, although one is an outstanding national labor leader. Of the four Republican members, two are strictly Republican candidates, one colored man, a class representative, and one labor representative whose Republicanism is somewhat nominal. The independent has always been a Charter supporter and seems to have been elected by Charter votes re-enforced by a group interested in an issue which has nothing to do with municipal government.

A comparison of the personnel of the old with the new council is all in favor of the new council. In the old council, with thirty-one Republicans and one Democrat, the latter did not distinguish himself as a critic of the majority. The personnel of the majority was drawn to an undue degree from the saloonkeeper class, and except as to a few suburban wards, the councilmen were selected mostly for their lack of ability to perform their duties. Naturally the Republican Executive Committee, headed by the "Boss," gave out the instructions and party discipline did the rest; discipline including a possible renomination. Committees hardly functioned.

### IMPROVED COUNCILS

It is certainly true that the quality of councilmen in the new council has been improved, in fact many outstanding men have been elected. For ten years there has been no outside interference and

committees have taken hold of all the intricate problems of city government and considered and solved them with the highest degree of intelligence.

The old council had little to say about its most important function, finances. The management was so poor that the public withheld financial support, making a bad situation worse; budgets were balanced with deficiency bonds; the city had a rundown, shabby appearance. The new council has always lived within income, even though this required drastic economies, meanwhile it has paid off the old deficiency bonds and reduced the net outstanding debt. At the same time, notable improvements have been made and public service has been bettered all down the line. No longer are there holes in the streets. Plaster and paint have been used generously to restore public buildings.

Formerly, the city hall was a haven for ward and precinct bolivars. The merit system was circumvented. Employees "contributed" a percentage of salary to the campaign fund. Good work at the polls was rewarded with a soft snap at good pay: the atmosphere seemed to say, "Never mind about public service—it is more important to serve the party." All this has vanished. The merit system is strictly enforced; contributions and political work are prohibited; all jobs are standardized and pay equalized; vacations and sick leave have made appearance; a contributary retirement system has been established; the morale of the city hall has immeasureably improved and is paying large dividends to the citizens through the initiative, interest, and loyalty of the employees. For several years no "provisional appointments"—usually a ruse for evading the merit system—have been made.

### ADMINISTRATION

Let us consider the executive and administrative departments, headed by a city manager. The Cincinnati charter provides that councilmen shall not interfere with the city manager in the performance of his duties. First, then, let it be said that this injunction has been obeyed almost perfectly. Now and then a councilman has found himself under pressure and has mildly intruded, but practically the city manager has had adequate support and therefore has been free from councilmanic pressure, hence his appointments are made without embarrassment.

One of the outstanding advantages of a city manager is that he can coördinate the work of the several departments and eliminate petty jealousy. The Cincinnati charter presumes to center all administration in the city manager, but incongruously retains several historical independent boards, whose members however have fully coöperated.

### PUBLIC UTILITIES

One of the most important accomplishments of the charter government during the past two years has been the reduction in electric and gas rates. After negotiations for six months with the public utility company supplying the city with electric power, an agreement much to the advantage of the consumer was reached in July 1934. This agreement established a reduction in rates of two million dollars for the first year it went into effect (August 1934-August 1935), with a gradual increase in the reduction each year until in the fourth year consumers will save $2,500,000. In addition to this reduction in rates a refund was given electric light consumers for approximately nine months on a basis of two million dollars a year. This refund has now been paid to thousands of consumers.

In order to show what the reduction in the cost of electricity will mean to Cincinnatians, a comparison of the cost of 80 kw.h. for a six-room house was made about the time the agreement was

announced. Thirty-three cities of a hundred thousand and over had electric rates lower than Cincinnati under its old rate. Under the agreement, however, Cincinnati's electric rates have now been reduced to such a point that for the year beginning August 1937 but one city will have lower rates.

During the early part of last year the problem of gas rates was tackled by the city manager and the city's public utility department. Settlement was finally reached which gave a refund of $2,000,000 to consumers with a saving in rates of $1,500,000 during the three-year period of the contract. According to the January 1, 1936, report of City Manager Dykstra, "Under the old rate 74.5 per cent of the residence bills in the city averaged seventy-five cents a thousand or more, while under the new rate only 19 per cent of the total annual monthly bills will reach that average."

The lower costs of gas and electricity may be one reason for a one hundred per cent increase in building construction last year over 1934. Cincinnati is seventeenth in size, but now tenth in value of building construction.

### FINANCES

Cincinnati entered 1936 with balances in every fund. Despite the fact that the city is coöperating freely with the federal government in spending bond money for public improvements, the year 1935 witnessed a reduction in the city's total outstanding bonded debt of three million dollars. Between January 1, 1931, and January 1, 1936, the gross general bonded debt has been reduced from one hundred million to eighty-six and a half million—a reduction of over thirteen million dollars. During the same five-year period the special assessment debt of $5,425,827 has been reduced to $4,296,687. The past year witnessed a reduction in this debt of nearly $900,000.

One important thing in Cincinnati is the improvement in purchasing methods. When it is considered that about 25 per cent of the total budget is spent for goods through the purchasing agent, it is clear that loose methods would cost a lot of money. The old system at times favored "friends of the house," provided improper or inadequate specifications, lacked standards, inspections and tests. No thought was given to seasonal buying. During the last ten years all of these failures have been corrected and a revolving fund known as "stores account" has been provided so that savings can be made by quantity and seasonal purchases in the most favorable markets.

### FIRE AND POLICE DEPARTMENTS

It is not possible in a short article to review all city departments, but as typical examples of efficient administration, let me cite two instances. First, the fire loss in Cincinnati has been decreasing steadily and in 1935 reached an unprecedented low. This is due both to organized prevention work as well as to a well organized force of fire fighters. Second, our police department, while probably undermanned, has made a great record, especially with regard to major offenses and rackets. There are no rackets so far as I am aware in Cincinnati. There is nothing so extravagant both in money and in moral values as rackets. Well, these are out because there is no dishonest spot where they can incubate.

There is one thing in Cincinnati which has not improved, but seems to be getting worse, and that is traffic accidents. This may or may not be a criticism of the city administration. It is pertinent to say that the city charter does not include the municipal court, which is organized under state law, and not subject to control by either council or the city manager. Until something

is done about the method of selecting judges there is little hope for reasonable reduction of traffic offenses and traffic accidents.

CITY MANAGERS

Cincinnati has been fortunate in its city managers. While C. O. Sherrill, the first manager, and C. A. Dykstra, the present manager, are quite different in style, they are both men of complete public devotion, of the highest character, and each brought to the job education, experience, and intelligence. The selection of such capable and outstanding men reflects the general desire of the councilmen to perform their full duty with respect to this most important function—municipal government.

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## DOES GOOD GOVERNMENT STICK?

(Continued from Page 71)

the cry goes up in all quarters that "those fellows in the city hall are grafters." When, as a result of the defeat of a proposed bond issue, three firehouses are immediately closed and further street lights are turned out, the newspapers are filled with letters to the editor accusing the city manager and the finance director of "punishing" the voters for not voting the bond issue. Supposedly responsible groups of property owners and business men either damn the city government with faint praise or openly accuse it of lacking sound budget procedure. These are the same groups which have forced a 40 per cent decrease in property valuation and led the successful campaign to place a tax limit in the constitution of the state and then to reduce that limit from fifteen mills to ten mills.

So between the millstones of ignorance and prejudice on one hand and irresponsible self-interest on the other, the city government grapples daily with the problem of protecting the lives and property of its citizens with shamefully inadequate income. Adequate salaries for city officials could hardly recompense them for the difficulties they suffer in performing their duties against a background of ignorance and indifference. And when salaries have been cut below the point which a self-respecting city should tolerate, the selflessness and gallantry of the city administration is almost incomprehensible. Unless some technique of constant, simple, public education can be found, I do not see how any good city government can hope to survive indefinitely.

MINNIE J. STANLEY, President
Ohio League of Women Voters

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## NEW ADHERENTS TO THE MANAGER PLAN

(Continued from Page 75)

ized and it is possible to develop organization which will encourage capable men and give them an opportunity. In private business, capable men can build their own organizations. In government there are more rules—the rules should be so designed that they help the able man as well as check the crook. To the ample evidence already existing that the city manager plan does this more effectively than any other form, the new recruits in the ranks are apparently adding credible testimony.

# Manager Government in Pennsylvania

**Borough manager government by ordinance works well, but the Keystone State should make provision for adoption of plan in all municipalities by popular vote**

ROBERT M. PORTER *Ashburnham School, Massachusetts*

MANAGER administration in Pennsylvania might well be termed "borough-manager" government, since there are now nineteen[1] boroughs with managers of the twenty municipalities maintaining that type of local control. The increase has been slow and irregular, but the trend has always been toward a growth in the number of communities with a manager, since there are four times as many localities operating under this official as there were in 1920. The population of these managerial towns has increased since the same date 50 per cent. These people have obtained more improvements from their tax dollar than those living in non-managerial municipalities; and, despite the general rapid rise of tax rates, in the Pennsylvania boroughs and township with a manager the tax increase has been limited to less than one mill since 1920.

The borough of Edgeworth was the first municipality of the state to adopt the managerial plan. From the incorporation of the borough in 1904 until 1914 it operated under the usual councilmanic committee system. Since the residents of this borough were largely employed in Pittsburgh during the daytime, they were not aware of the needs of the municipality. Proper cooperation of council and committees was hard to obtain, committees worked independently, there was delay in obtaining action, and as a result of these inadequacies there arose friction between the citizens and borough officials.

The Edgeworth council discussed the difficulty and came to the conclusion that the only effective remedy would be to provide some central authority to direct the affairs of the borough. To gain this end the office of borough manager was created. The manager was to perform all the administrative work of the borough and the council would determine the general principles and policies, while councilmanic committees would exist in an advisory capacity.

In Edgeworth the borough manager system worked well and during the ensuing years it spread to other communities. In 1917 Pennsylvania passed legislation enabling boroughs to adopt the manager plan by ordinance after which the spread of the system was more rapid. The following table will indicate this growth. Those communities in capital letters are still operating under the managerial form of government.

| Municipality | Adoption | Dropped |
|---|---|---|
| EDGEWORTH | 1914 | |
| Grove City | 1914 | |
| Philipsburg | 1918 | 1918 |
| SEWICKLEY | 1918 | |

[1]Since this article was prepared one more municipality in Pennsylvania, Sewickley Heights, has adopted the manager plan by ordinance.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| TOWANDA | 1918 | |
| AMBRIDGE | 1918 | |
| Coraopolis | 1920 | 1925 |
| CARLISLE | 1921 | |
| OSBORNE | 1921 | |
| LANSDOWNE | 1922 | |
| BLAIRSVILLE | 1922 | |
| Dormont | 1922 | 1928 |
| WAYNESBORO | 1922 | |
| Clifton Heights | 1923 | 1924 |
| Springdale | 1923 | 1930 |
| MILTON | 1924 | |
| ASPINWALL | 1925 | |
| Conshohocken | 1926 | 1931 |
| WEST READING | 1926 | |
| AVALON | 1927 | |
| HANOVER | 1927 | |
| ELLWOOD CITY | 1927 | |
| MOUNT LEBANON (Township) | 1928 | |
| Jeannette | 1929 | |
| PHOENIXVILLE | 1930 | |
| ASHLAND | 1930 | |
| EDGEWOOD | 1931 | |
| NORTHAMPTON | 1932 | |
| Jersey Shore | | |

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The localities that have employed the borough manager plan have enjoyed certain benefits which more than justify the adoption of this system. The outstanding benefit is that the tax dollar of the citizen has been expended more wisely, and more has been accomplished with this dollar.

The most striking examples of a lower cost of construction under the direction of a borough manager are to be found in Carlisle. The first piece of work done by the manager was the construction of a sewer. The low bid of $5,986 was rejected and the borough manager constructed the sewer with borough labor for $2,478. The next important piece of work was the construction of a street. Under the direction of the manager the work was done at a cost of $8,000 while, based on the cost of other streets in the borough, the cost under private construction would have been $12,573. At the end of his first nine months the manager estimated that he had saved Carlisle a total of $16,405.75. Substantial savings as a result of borough labor on construction work are also reported in other municipalities.

It must not be thought, however, that the only saving the manager has brought to his municipality has been a reduction in construction costs. Other means of lowering the operating costs of the various localities have been discovered. The centralization of authority has resulted in the unification of the various departments of the borough government which facilitated the introduction of centralized purchasing and modern methods of bookkeeping. In many municipalities the operation of municipal water or electric plants was made more efficient.

The purchase of the Waynesboro water plant was one of the determining factors in the adoption of a manager. In Carlisle, the water plant was purchased during the managerial regime. All of the nine manager boroughs which operate municipally-owned water systems or electric plants, or both, report a surplus from their operation. For example, Borough Manager Harry C. Lea estimated that the taxes of Aspinwall, which in 1930 reported a surplus of $32,192 from the operation of both water and electric systems, would be raised 100 per cent if the borough were not operating these utilities.

The experience of Blairsville illustrates how the financial condition of a borough can be improved by managerial control. Under this system the floating debt was removed and in 1931 the borough had a surplus of $123,225. From 1922, when the manager plan was adopted, until 1934 the tax rate in this borough has not gone on a stratosphere flight. The tax rate for 1934 was set

at seven mills for the twelfth year. During these twelve years, the local rate for schools has increased from seven mills to sixteen mills and the county millage rate has increased from one mill to twelve mills. The manager borough thus seems to be more efficiently governed and administered, especially when we realize that the physical condition of the borough has been improved steadily during the administration of the borough manager.

The citizens of Edgewood are also rejoicing because they adopted manager control. In the face of declining tax collections, the borough millage rate has been reduced two mills; yet, the financial standing of the borough has been improved. There is now a twelve-mill tax rate and no floating debt while previous to the adoption of the manager plan the borough had a fourteen-mill tax rate and a floating debt of $75,000. Edgewood's present cost of operating and maintaining the service departments is only 49 per cent of the 1928 cost but the same service is being rendered.

COMMENDATIONS

Good government is not to be measured merely in terms of pecuniary savings, but such financial improvement is meritorious when a higher standard of efficiency is maintained. Whether or not this latter has been accomplished may best be judged by the reactions of citizens of the community to the manager government as compared to the former system. For the purpose of gaining this information newspaper editors of municipalities with managers were requested to give their reaction to that type of government. Statements from the replies follow.

From Ambridge comes the word that "the present manager has the town in the best financial shape in its history. We believe that for a borough the size of Ambridge or larger the borough manager form of government is the most economical and efficient."

Mr. M. R. Shale, publisher of *The Blairsville Dispatch,* says, "We have a most satisfactory form of manager government and have no thought of returning to the conventional type of borough government."

The editor of *The Evening Sentinel* reports that, "The borough manager plan in Carlisle has been a success."

The citizens of Edgeworth after twenty-two years of manager control remain strong advocates of this form of local administration and feel that the manager has been responsible for better and more prompt service in all branches of borough administration.

Mr. Floyd Chalfont, editor of *The Record Herald,* is glad to give his favorable reaction to the manager plan as it has operated in Waynesboro. "Unquestionably the borough manager plan is working well in Waynesboro, where it has been in operation for many years. It works for economy and efficiency."

THE BOROUGH MANAGER

This unanimity of opinion in favor of the various managerial regimes is a fine recommendation for the Pennsylvania managers who have given municipal affairs the same degree of attention and consideration that the business executive would give to his firm. As a result, with the proper coöperation from council, the borough manager has been able to perform a creditable piece of work. Much of this, of course, has been a result of the men in control. As the borough manager of Waynesboro, A. Stover Fitz, writes: "You will realize that no system of government in itself can accomplish any results unless those who are in charge of it are honest and conscientious. The borough manager system of government is no miracle

worker and it cannot do the impossible; but if properly handled and supported, it is unquestionably the most economical way of administering municipal affairs."

Since the preceding discussion has been so favorable, one would infer that men of a high degree of ability and training have acted as either township or borough managers. To infer such would be to arrive at the truth of the matter.

Since Mr. H. F. Burkholder serves both as full time borough manager of Edgeworth and part time manager at Osborne, there are only nineteen managers in Pennsylvania. Eleven of these men have attended colleges or universities and three more have had training beyond the high school level. Fifteen of the managers either graduated from a college engineering curriculum or followed that profession. Of the college graduates nearly all were civil engineers. One manager was a factory executive and two were school teachers before entering the managerial profession.

The relationship between the manager and the ordinance is an integral part of the managerial system since all borough or township managers in Pennsylvania hold their office as the result of a councilmanic ordinance. All of these ordinances, moreover, provide that the manager may be removed or the plan abolished by a majority vote of council. It is evident, therefore, that the growth and continuance of manager government depends on the favorable action of the councils in those political subdivisions enabled by state law to adopt this plan of government.

Those councils which have passed manager ordinances usually direct that the manager shall carry out his duties subject to, or under the direction of, council. This is usually a precautionary measure and in actual practice the managers perform their administrative duties independently and then make monthly or annual reports to the legislative body.

Certain qualifications that the manager must fulfill are set forth by several of the ordinances. Of the thirteen that do make qualifications, twelve state that the manager shall be a male. In Carlisle, Ellwood City, Hanover, Northampton, Phoenixville, and West Reading the manager must be a citizen of the United States. None of the ordinances require the manager to be a resident of the municipality when he is appointed. Residency during his term of office is required in Carlisle, Ellwood City, Hanover, Northampton, and Phoenixville. The results of the present selection have indicated that a non-resident stands a better chance of being appointed as a manager.

Blairsville, Hanover, Northampton, and Phoenixville have included in their ordinances a provision to the effect that the manager shall be "a man with such training and experience as to enable him to perform the duties in a successful and business-like manner." All the municipalities require that the manager post a bond to guarantee the faithful performance of his duties which are then set forth by the ordinance either in general terms or in detail.

### ABANDONMENTS

An investigation of the causes which terminated manager control in nine cases has not been detrimental to the future success of the managerial system which has survived a trial and error process in many Pennsylvania boroughs. Mr. D. C. Wagner states the basic weakness when he says, "The plan in Pennsylvania which permits managers to be installed by ordinance only, instead of charter, is very weak in that the plan can be dropped by a political majority in council, even if it meets general public approval."

This fact is graphically portrayed in the case of Conshohocken as is evidenced by portions of an editorial from the *Conshohocken Recorder.*

"In 1926 town council was convinced that the business of the borough could not be done under the old committee system. Responsibility for mistakes was easily evaded; construction work was planned and supervised by men with no technical training in the work they were called upon to plan and do; official records of the borough were not kept intact. Many of the records were in the hands of the various engineers employed and in possession of members and former members of council."

Mr. H. D. Herbert was selected as borough manager of Conshohocken. "Town Council and the manager worked in the closest harmony until this year (1931) when opposition developed. Improvements . . . suggested by him were rejected by council and used as propaganda against the manager.

"Five years under the manager system have been profitable to the taxpayers. The improvements made, the new equipment obtained and the additional revenue raised by the initiative of the manager and the county aid secured through his efforts combined with the savings made from work done—the improvements are still in use—have more than equaled the cost of the manager system. The records prove it."

But the political opposition obtained a majority control in council and the managerial system was then discontinued.

In Jeannette the manager system was adopted after the *Jeannette News-Dispatch* had suggested for years that the change was preferable to the old plan of eighteen councilmen under which inefficiency and buck-passing were in evidence. Finally, the council made a gesture and hired Hale A. Guss as borough manager but gave him little or no authority, and with eighteen bosses to supervise him he did the best he could. Once he found he was a creature of council he accepted a position in Northampton and with his resignation the managerial plan came to an end.

The Grove City situation is explained by Mr. Floyd McClymonds, editor of the *Grove City Reporter-Herald.*

"In conversation with councilmen who were in office during the two years when the straight manager plan was in operation here, they report dissatisfaction with the plan itself and with the official they hired. It was the sentiment in Grove City that authority should be vested in a council elected by the people and responsible to them. Perhaps, had Grove City been more fortunate in the man to whom the managerial authority was delegated, our experience might have been more satisfactory."

On December 12, 1922, the council of Springdale adopted the managerial type of government. The first manager who unsuccessfully held his position for a few months was succeeded by a bookkeeper who held the office in title only. After this transition period, Mr. John F. Pierce assumed the duties on February 1, 1926, and continued his work in Springdale until December, 1929, when he resigned to go to Cuba as a consulting engineer. During his term of office he reorganized the borough finances, reduced the cost of garbage collection and the water rates, and made many improvements in the physical condition of the borough. For two months after Mr. Pierce's resignation there was a temporary manager appointed. Upon a change in the membership of council, however, the manager ordinance was repealed.

According to Ernest H. Barlow, bor-

(Continued on Page 116)

# Black Sheep: The Story of the Abandonments of the Manager Plan

**Fifty-five referenda over a five-year period result in but seven abandonments of manager plan government**

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IN THE five years from 1931 to 1935 inclusive only five cities, one town, and one village abandoned the manager plan of government by vote of the people.[1] When one considers the turmoil of the times, this is a remarkable record. The year 1932 was a high-water mark for throwing those in power out of office, but the manager plan rode out of the storm. Here is the chronological record of abandonments: 1931: Cleveland, Ohio, and Brattleboro, Vermont; 1932: Lima, Ohio, and Windsor (village), Vermont; 1933: Sulphur, Oklahoma; 1934: Fall River, Massachusetts, and St. Albans, Vermont; 1935: none. On the other side of the ledger is recorded a long column of cities which voted on the issue of retaining or abandoning the plan and decided in its favor. Whereas in this five-year period 7 cities, towns, and villages voted to abandon the plan, there were 48 referenda in which cities voted to retain it. In 1931, eleven voted to keep the plan; in 1932, twelve; in 1933, thirteen; in 1934, ten; and in 1935, two. Cities voting to continue the plan included: Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Phoenix, Arizona; Staunton, Virginia; Long Beach, California; Flint, Michigan; and Kenosha, Wisconsin. The process of adoption, retention, and abandonment of the manager plan brings the total for council-manager cities in the United States as of January 1, 1936, to 438.[2] So much for the council-manager record in general. The specific causes of abandonment of the plan in the seven cities, towns, and villages under consideration are revealing.[3]

### CLEVELAND

Cleveland adopted the council-manager form of government by a home rule amendment to its charter in 1924. This amendment provided for a council of twenty-five members elected by proportional representation. There was the

[1]For an earlier analysis of the abandonment of manager charters, see the author's articles in the September and November 1930 issues of this REVIEW. That analysis was criticized because Lake City (Florida), Dearborn (Michigan), Missionary Ridge (Tennessee), and Michigan City (Indiana), were included, although the people did not vote to abandon the plan. In Lake City the legislature abolished the manager plan without a local referendum; Dearborn and Missionary Ridge were annexed to larger cities; in Michigan City the plan was lost through a decision of the state supreme court that Indiana's council-manager law was unconstitutional. In response to this criticism the author includes herewith only those cities abandoning the plan by vote of the people.

[2]See *City Manager Yearbook*, 1932, pp. 5-6; 1933, pp. 46-47; and *The Municipal Year Book*, 1934, pp. 94-95; 1935, pp. 114-115. For information on the year 1935, I am indebted to The International City Managers' Association.

[3]Unless otherwise indicated, the opinions regarding the situation in these communities come from correspondence with officials past and present, from interested citizens, and from observers. I am greatly indebted to those who have thus generously assisted me. For reasons that will be apparent, the sources of certain statements are not disclosed.

usual concentration of administrative authority in a manager appointed by the council. For seven years the plan withstood the onslaughts of its opponents. Finally, in 1931, the stay-at-home "voters" permitted the opponents of the manager plan to succeed in their purpose. By a vote of 61,448 to 51,831 out of a total registration of 248,788, the mayor-council plan was restored by amending the charter. The story of the abandonment of the manager plan in Cleveland overshadows the chronicles of other reversals because of the size of the city and the controversy which it precipitated. The details have often been aired in print.[4] The judgment of Mayo Fesler and of the executive board of the Citizens League of Cleveland was, in summary, that the manager plan had been abandoned for the following reasons:

> a. First and foremost because of the persistent and unremitting bedevilment of administrative officers by party leaders and partisan councilmen for party spoils and special favors.
>
> b. Because of the antagonisms produced by failure of the council and the first manager to recognize the clear distinctions in the charter between their respective fields of activities.
>
> c. Because of the accumulated antagonisms, which develop against any charter under the American idea of regarding government as a grab-bag into which every citizen has a right to dip his hand and grab all he can get.
>
> d. Because many of the voters disliked the proportional representation method of election. It was especially obnoxious to the party leaders, who encouraged opposition to the system.
>
> e. Because the voters, as usual, voted their resentments rather than their appreciations. Their resentment at the operation of the spoils system and the land scandals blinded their eyes to the general improvement in the municipal services under the city manager plan.[5]

Political by-play colored the operation of the manager plan in Cleveland and prevented it from receiving a long trial. However, the favorable vote on the manager plan for Cuyahoga County (containing Cleveland) in 1935 undeniably reveals a leaning back toward the council-manager idea for Cleveland. It makes the possibility of Cleveland's readoption of this form of government less remote.

### LIMA, OHIO

Lima, Ohio, adopted the manager plan in 1922 by home rule charter. By the census of 1930 Lima had a population of 42,217. On November 8, 1932, the manager plan was dropped by a vote of 9,183 to 8,775. Some 1,257 ballots were not marked on this question. By charter amendment, a mayor-council plan with election of the council by wards was the successor. Because the amendment did not place beyond doubt the date on which the mayor-council plan should take effect, legal controversy ensued. The city solicitor ruled that the city manager and the city commissioners should continue in office until new officers were elected at the regular election in November 1933.

Reasons given by correspondents for the change in Lima give different aspects to the picture. A former official writes: "As in all municipal campaigns those holding office had to suffer and this together with the economic condition I think can be safely said to have been the basis for the change. As in the national campaign the voters wanted to turn those who were in, out"—a very natural and human impulse. A familiar

[4]See Mayo Fesler, "Why Cleveland Abandoned the Plan," *Public Management*, 13 (1931), 399-403, and "Why Cleveland Abandoned City Manager Plan," *Greater Cleveland*, Apr. 5, 1934; S. L. Reeder, "Cleveland Deserts the Manager Plan," and W. R. Hopkins, "Cleveland Still Dissatisfied," in this REVIEW 20 (1931), 739-40, and 24 (1935) 27-31, 41.

[5]*Greater Cleveland*, vol. 9, no. 28, p. 128 (April 5, 1934).

story comes from a leading citizen. For a time those who had been instrumental in the adoption of the charter continued their interest in it, and saw that first-class men were elected to the commission. When this nonpartisan group wearied of the struggle, political parties began to promote their friends for the commission. There was a rise and fall in the interest of the plan's sponsors. Moreover, "the county political organization was strong enough to compel the county budget commission to reduce the appropriations for the city of Lima to the very minimum, and thus practically prevented effective administration of the plan." To cap the climax, the local newspaper waged war on the manager plan. The editor believed in the mayor-council form and threw the paper's influence to its support. In spite of all this, the vote was close. There was a majority of only 408 votes against the manager plan out of a 17,958 total.

BRATTLEBORO, VERMONT

The population of Brattleboro, Vermont, in 1930 was 8,709. Gathered together on March 6, 1928, in annual town meeting, the citizens of Brattleboro voted 789 to 563 to adopt the manager plan under the state optional manager act.[6] Of 5976 legal voters in the town, only 22 per cent expressed their opinions. Many taxpayers had been impressed by the record of the manager plan in Springfield, Vermont, and a committee had been investigating the idea for five years. Appointment of a manager was put in the hands of the selectmen of the town, and these worthies were not among those friendly to the plan. Business men interested in the plan could not be persuaded to run for office. This was the first stumbling block. Second, the people of Brattleboro had been promised that the plan would be similar to that in Springfield, where the manager held several elective offices—those of clerk, treasurer, and tax collector—in addition to his appointive post. But the manager in Brattleboro hesitated to run for any elective offices, believing such a move would imperil the whole plan. Those who advocated such a procedure were naturally antagonized. Third, the manager was instrumental in the adoption and later in the enforcement of certain regulatory ordinances. The building code and milk regulations made certain enemies. Fourth, the manager developed a number of new services: ash and refuse collection, instruction in the public playground, surfacing of dirt roads. These new services were an asset to the town, but they cost money. In the annual town meeting of 1930 the citizens voted to discontinue the first two services on the grounds of economy.

The *Brattleboro Reformer* said in its post-mortem of the abandonment of the manager plan: "It did not prove economical. . . . Voters who favored it on the belief that it was going to reduce or at least keep down taxes could not be blamed for feeling that their belief had been misplaced."[7]

One of the sponsors of the plan writes: "When the manager first arrived, I told him no matter what he did in the end, he must first make a showing of economy in the way of reduced taxes. . . . At one town meeting the voters gave him and the board a clear mandate to keep down the budget. Again with the prodding of the board, he exceeded the budget." The tax rate for the years involved was: 1928, $3.91; 1929, $3.65; 1930, $3.82; 1931, $3.73. The first result of the plan was to reduce taxes substantially, but in 1930 the rate was back close to the 1928 level. Although there were several unexpected contingencies which were partly responsible, the years 1928-1931 did not show the anticipated

[6]Cf. Vermont, *Public Laws*, 1933, sec. 3590-3602 on "Town Managers."

[7]*Brattleboro Reformer*, March 7, 1931.

reduction in the cost of town government, and criticism was rife. Apparently, an anti-managerial board of selectmen were willing to have the budget adopted in town meeting exceeded so that a reaction would be forthcoming. Finally, "it was the same old story of the apathy of the majority, and the quiet under-cover work of a minority. The opposition came chiefly from the old office-holders who objected to any encroachment on their pet prerogatives." In town meeting on March 3, 1931, 1723 citizens cast their ballots with a majority of 149 to discontinue the manager plan.

### VILLAGE OF WINDSOR, VERMONT

The village of Windsor, Vermont, adopted the manager plan in 1926.[8] In 1932 the village abandoned the plan by a vote of 180 to 121, with only 301 out of a total of 1650 registered voters participating. One of the present officials claims that the village decided to use a board of three trustees because it was believed that the manager was an unnecessary expense. It was due to an economic point of view on their part. A former official states that the plan would never have been defeated if the better element in the village had taken the trouble to turn out to the meeting. However, they were over-confident, and gave those opposed to the plan a chance to wreck it. "A very little work," says one commentator, "had people been wiser to what was going on, would have changed the whole thing, for I think that the opposing side was practically all out." This has happened in larger communities than the village of Windsor.[9]

### ST. ALBANS, VERMONT

By charter amendment the manager plan was launched in the city of St. Albans, Vermont, in 1920. A special act of the legislature was adopted at a local referendum. It created a council of four, including the mayor. At the city meeting one councilman was elected by each of two wards, and one councilman and the mayor were elected by the voters of the city at large. In the matter of selection, tenure, and powers of the manager, the act was representative of the best thought on manager charters.[10] The manager had ample powers of appointment and removal, and he, in turn, was responsible to the council. This community had a population in 1930 of 8,020.

At a special city meeting held on June 8, 1934, the people voted 607 to 208 to abandon the manager plan. They adopted a revision of the charter which returned the city essentially to the original aldermanic form of 1920. During the years in which the plan was in force, St. Albans had a half-dozen managers. It did not operate entirely as provided in the charter. In the opinion of several officials, one of the difficulties was that the city was not in a position to pay a salary that would attract a qualified manager. Also, "as time went on there was considerable dissatisfaction, particularly as the real estate appraisals were raised to bring higher taxes. . . ." However, the chief problem seems to have been that "the city not being able to pay a salary to a man qualified for the position of city manager, and a man hired for the position and paid a salary the city could meet was not qualified to fill

[8]Under the laws of Vermont a village may avail itself of the provisions of the town-manager act in so far as they are applicable. The trustees of the village have the power to appoint, supervise, and discharge a manager, whenever the voters of the village adopt the plan in an annual or special meeting. Cf. Vermont, *Public Laws*, 1933, sec. 3647.

[9]The town of Windsor, Vermont, however, continues to operate under the manager system.

[10]See R. T. Crane, *Digest of City Manager Charters.*

the place and carry out the plan as it should be carried out." There may have been other reasons, but they have not been brought to my attention by any correspondent.

SULPHUR, OKLAHOMA

Sulphur, Oklahoma, adopted the manager plan in 1924, and abandoned it in 1933. Sulphur had a population in 1930 of 4,242. At a special election on July 26, 1932, the voters by a two-to-one majority adopted an amendment conferring the duties of manager upon the mayor. The governor refused his signature because the amendment had been adopted at a special instead of at a general election. The charter amendment was again initiated and placed before the voters on April 4, 1933. This time the majority was three to one, and the governor attached his signature. One week later the mayor assumed the managerial duties.

While this city was operating under the manager system, the mayor decided that both a mayor and manager were a superfluous "luxury" for a small city. He sponsored and "put over" the amendment at the special election in 1932. When the amendment was ultimately signed by the governor, he became officially mayor and city manager. Further light may be shed upon the situation by these facts: "The man who served as manager for the last three years of council-manager government was chairman of the Democratic County Central Committee just prior to becoming manager. The leader in the movement to overthrow the manager plan was the chairman of the Republican County Committee."[11]

Sulphur is divided into two distinct and separate divisions known as East Sulphur and West Sulphur, each of which has long vied for supremacy. Heated quarrels and factionalism are not soil in which the manager plan thrives. The usual cry of economy was raised and turned the voters against the manager plan. In the last analysis, "it was purely a local issue and not one that involved principles of good government."

FALL RIVER, MASSACHUSETTS

Prior to 1928, Fall River, Massachusetts, was governed by a special-act charter which called for a mayor and bicameral city council. At a special election in that year, a light vote being cast, the people of Fall River by a slight majority adopted the state optional manager plan otherwise known as Plan D. At the time the city was in financial difficulties, because of the slump in its textile industry and increased taxation. The advocates of the change went directly to the people, asking them to circulate petitions and to secure support from neighbors and friends. The result seems to have been a surprise to all concerned. The politicians had been caught napping, but they swung into action. When the councilmanic election was over, the Plan D advocates had elected two councilmen; the politicians, three. A local politician was selected as manager. For two years the mayor and two associates on the council dominated the situation, and the mayor, according to many correspondents, was virtually the executive head of the city.

In 1930 there was a new deal on the city council. One of the councilors favorable to the manager plan became mayor. An out-of-state man was appointed as manager. But conditions were now highly inauspicious. Before the election the city had defaulted on the interest due on tax anticipation notes. In December the situation was acute with operating expenses and payrolls being met by week-to-week loans from local banks. This crisis had been in the making for some years. While industrial activity had been dropping, city taxes had been rising. From 1923 to 1928 the value of industrial products de-

[11] J. C. Phillips, *The Operation of the Council Manager Plan of Government in Oklahoma Cities*, 1935, p. 172.

creased 30 per cent, while the city tax increased 30 per cent.[12] With the heavy wind of textile depression blowing, the city budget had not been trimmed. When the storm struck with full force in 1930, the theory of local self-government yielded to the practice of preserving municipal credit. An act was passed authorizing the city of Fall River to fund certain indebtedness and establishing a state board of finance. Broad powers over the city's finances were lodged for ten years in a board of three members appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the executive council. With control went authorization to issue ten-year serial bonds to the amount of $3,500,000 to meet obligations, and to issue refunding notes to the amount of $1,000,000.

The act stipulated that no appropriations could be made and no debt incurred except with the approval or upon the recommendation or requisition of the board in writing. This applied to the city council, to all departments under it, to the state-controlled police department, and to the school committee.[13]

From 1928 to 1930 the manager plan had been entrammeled in political toils in Fall River. After the councilmanic election of 1930, a fair trial of the council-manager plan seemed possible. But in the brief period from November to February, state control was instituted, the board of finance being appointed on February 21, 1931. Fall River could no longer be considered as typical of the manager plan. Real authority was lodged with a state board of financial control. The council-manager form of government functioned only nominally.[14]

Before the manager plan was dropped in 1934, another shift in the council resulted in the appointment of the city engineer, an able official, as manager. Under the control of the board of finance, the manager plan being subordinate thereto, the city was on it way back to financial stability, and industrial activity was rising.

But the forces in the city that had opposed the manager plan from the start were ready in 1934 with a petition to shift plans from D to A under the laws of Massachusetts. Plan A is the strong-mayor-council form of government. In the interests of economy, the axe-wielding activities of the authorities had made enemies. General indifference and lethargy prevailed. The city had been through a good many crises, and whatever happened, the state board of finance, like the flag, was still there. At the referendum which was put before the voters in 1934 there were 13,864 votes for Plan A; 10,150 for the manager plan; and 10,339 blank ballots. The change was due to reasons "purely political." It "was not due to defects in the system, but because the politicians wanted it thrown out." Again, "the 'pols' who were pushed away from the public crib took advantage of the lethargy of the 'good element.'"

The voters elected the last city manager under Plan D as the first mayor under Plan A. Waltham, Massachusetts, had set a precedent for this procedure by abandoning the manager plan and electing the former manager seven times as mayor. Technically, Fall River has adopted and abandoned the manager form of government. Actually, the plan made no real headway prior to 1931 because of the political complexion of the council. Early in 1931 it was overshadowed by the Fall River Board of Finance.

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[12]See H. G. Fishack, "A Financial Dictatorship for Fall River," in this REVIEW, 20 (1931), 201.

[13]Massachusetts, *Acts*, 1931, Chap. 44, sec. 8.

[14]For the record of the Fall River Board of Finance, see *Fourth Annual Report*, 1935, p. 27, on reduction of net general debt, assessed valuations, property tax levy, and revenue appropriation expenditures.

SUMMARY

To analyze with fairness the circumstances, the forces, and the personalities that combined to cause abandonment of the manager plan in any city, village, or town, is a task defying generalization. Each case must be treated individually. Local peculiarities which doubtless explain abandonment in some instances keep their secrets from all who do not live in the communities themselves.

Cities which had abandoned the manager plan prior to 1930 can be classified into three groups:[15] (1) cities in which defects in specific charters, or disadvantages inherent in the manager plan itself led to its failure; (2) cities which lost their manager charters through circumstances which were largely extraneous to the plan itself; and (3) cities in which the manager plan was given a very brief trial under political conditions prejudicial to its success. To what extent can the cities abandoning the plan from 1931 to 1935 be placed in these categories? Cleveland falls predominantly in the third class as do most of the others. To this general statement exceptions must be made. Lima, Ohio, falls partly in the third class and partly in the second. There the depression seems to have been a factor of considerable importance, and may be cited as an extraneous circumstance parallel to the collapse of the real estate boom in Florida which played a part in the abandonment of manager charters in that state. In St. Albans, Vermont, the materials are too scanty to permit a classification. Fall River lies athwart the second and third groups. The economic depression was an extraneous circumstance leading to the Fall River Board of Finance which reduced the manager plan to a nominal status. There were plenty of "pols" who kept the political pot boiling. Eventually, even the residue of the manager plan boiled away.

If there is any moral to the story of abandonment, it is that the friends of the manager plan cannot, with impunity, cease their political activities once the manager charter has been adopted. They must exercise eternal vigilance at councilmanic elections, and they must be on guard against the day when opponents of the manager plan will come out of hiding to swing the pendulum against the manager charter. The large proportion of non-voters and of blank ballots at referenda on the adoption, retention, or abandonment of the manager plan is a factor. Sometimes an organized minority of thinking voters succeeds in putting over a manager charter, and bows later to an organized minority of politicians who have quietly girded their forces to the attack. An indifferent mass of non-voters permits these active groups to resolve the issue. The manager plan, like any other governmental institution, may be a prey to passing politics. But in none of the cities under review was the manager plan abandoned because of an inherent weakness of the plan itself.

The council-manager plan underwent in the five years from 1931 to 1935 a baptism of fire with fifty-five referenda on its continuance. The seven reversals that resulted are only the exceptions that prove the rule of its durability. Four of these seven exceptions were localized in New England where the manager idea has made slow headway as compared with the Middle West and the Pacific Slope.

[15] See the author's articles in this REVIEW for September and November, 1930.

# Competent Citizenship: The Only Way To Good Government

**There is great need for an intelligent, determined, and nation-wide effort to improve the quality of citizen thinking and citizen action**

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IN THE democratic state, citizenship is fundamentally the principle or bond of union and the basis of social and political organization, and therefore the state based on citizenship functions effectively only as citizenship functions effectively.

Broadly speaking, in the earlier stages of society the principle of union was that of kinship, and the way that kinship was conceived, and the way it was extended, provides the key to the social order. At a higher stage of social development, a principle of authority independent of kinship came into play. Patriarchal forms of government gave place to tribal and monarchical forms, and under these forms extensive unions of diverse populations became possible. In the end, however, authoritarian government proved to be too rigid to allow adequate expression to the growing aspirations of people and, accordingly, citizenship as a principle or bond of union began to emerge.

In its political significance the supreme characteristic of citizenship is the fact that under it the relation of government and governed is reversed. Instead of an absolute ruler or governing class or caste, the people themselves are the state and the source of political authority; government is their servant and not their master, and in its functioning it works not from the top down but from the bottom up.

Obviously, therefore, for the proper conduct of public affairs in a social order based on citizenship, two things are of prime importance. One of these is machinery of government that will safeguard the citizen against arbitrary interference and enable him to fully use his powers for the benefit of himself and his fellows. And the other is a degree of competence in the citizen body that is equal to the task of operating that machinery in a manner that is really effective and that the public interest demands.

## II

Hitherto in our thinking about government, as Arthur Twining Hadley once pointed out, we have been inclined to place the chief emphasis upon competent machinery rather than upon competent citizenship, notwithstanding the evident fact that the force that drives the machinery is equally necessary if government is properly to do its work.

There is, for example, the story of a man who came to the agent of a manufacturing company to buy a pump for the watering of his stock. When the agent asked him how he proposed to get the power to operate the pump, he replied that he wanted an instrument that was large enough not only to supply the water that was needed for his cattle but an additional amount sufficient to run it. And when told by the agent that such a thing was impossible, he

was greatly surprised and disappointed, and he said that with the amount of capital he was prepared to spend, it seemed to him that the company must be something of a hoax if it could not supply such a pump.

Such simplicity is amusing until we realize that very much the same thing is reflected in the mental attitude of a large section of the American public with respect to the machinery of government. There appears to be the assumption that if the machinery were good enough it should somehow supply its own power, that citizens should be left free to pursue their own private affairs, and that their actual share in the work of making the machinery go should be reduced to a minimum, if not entirely eliminated.

Even the writers of textbooks on government are prone to stress the machinery and the task of administration, describing them in all their minute details, while saying little of the force of public opinion that is needed to make the machinery go, or of how that force is to be developed and directed.

## III

It is clear enough, to be sure, that our American machinery of government is more or less defective at many points and that it needs to be improved. Nothing that has been said should be so construed as to obscure that fact, or the fact that all the efforts to improve our machinery of government, to make it more responsible to the citizen body and a better vehicle for expressing the will of the citizen body, are to the good.

It seems clear, however, if democratic government in America is to survive and, what is more to the point, is to be worthy of survival, that far more pressing just now than the problem of improving our machinery of government is the problem of improving our citizenship, for the simple reason that a defective machine with plenty of power is more likely to accomplish the needed results than a good machine that lacks power.

Think, for example, of how extensively the idea of local government, the right of people to manage their local affairs, is now being used throughout the nation as a kind of a smoke-screen to cover something that is entirely different, the "right of the local political boss or clique to carry on what is essentially a political racket, to fill local offices with subservient and incompetent party supporters, to award local contracts to those who in some way will pay heavily to secure them, to impose unjust tax levies upon some and to exempt others, and in other ways virtually to exact tribute from individuals and from whole sections of the community."

In a mid-western city only a few months past a certain contractor was awarded a street-paving contract which provided for the paving of several city blocks. About one block of the paving was completed when the city inspector appeared, and after a brief inspection he declared that it did not meet the requirements, and directed that it be taken up. To the contractor's earnest protests, the inspector swore unctiously, and with seeming indignation, and then departed. But in the course of an hour or so he reappeared and asked the contractor what brand of cement he was using. He then mentioned another brand, and told the contractor that if he would agree to use it he had decided to revoke his order to tear up the block of completed work. With this demand, the contractor felt obliged to comply, although he knew full well that the brand he was required to use was the product of a factory owned by the notorious political boss of the city, that it was inferior in quality, and that to use it meant that he must pay an excessive price.

Manifestly, such abuses of government result not so much from defective machinery of government as from defective citizenship, because the evidence at hand is conclusive that wherever citizenship is alert and competent these abuses do not exist.

Machiavelli once said that the greatest danger to government is for it to become contemptible. And without any doubt the increasing exposures of inexcusable weakness, inefficiency, and corruption in our government, extending all the way from the bottom to the top, are tending to make it contemptible in the eyes of a steadily increasing number of people. And whether this growing contempt shall issue in a rejuvenation of American democracy or in a "strong arm" type of government essentially Fascistic in character, depends very much upon developments during the next ten or twenty years.

IV

The fact is that our democracy was started upon its career with a very inadequate conception of citizenship and it is only within a limited circle that we have succeeded in improving very much upon that conception.

With the powerful reaction against the abuses of monarchical government that came in the closing years of the eighteenth and the early years of the nineteenth centuries, there developed, as Bryce showed in his Yale lectures, a widespread belief in "natural citizen competence," a belief, in other words, that people generally, at least in what are called civilized countries, are naturally qualified to be capable citizens, that naturally they have sense enough to judge of public affairs, discernment enough to choose the right men for public office, self-control enough to accept the decision of the majority, honesty enough to seek the general interest rather than to try to secure their own interests at the expense of the community, and public spirit enough to take any necessary trouble in behalf of the common good.

It was an easy-going conception of citizenship, and to an extent that is really quite amazing, it has lingered on in American life. No greater application of the conception in a concrete case, says Bryce, was ever made than by the men who carried the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments to the constitution.

Whatever the facts of our history that explain the persistence of this belief in natural citizen competence, the fallacy of it, in view of the new, vast, complex, and bewildering problems of the modern state, is pathetically evident.

The truth probably is that citizen capacity, like any other capacity of human nature, must be developed, or else it remains latent and futile. As that eminent political philosopher, T. H. Green, once put it, "the apprehension of a community of well being, the recognition of common rights and a common good, and all the basic elements that condition a free state and a competent citizenship are implicit in the generality of the people, but they must be elicited by education and experience."

V

The soundness of Green's premises cannot be successfully challenged. And, in view of the crisis through which our democracy is now passing, these premises assume a very particular and urgent significance.

The evident plight of government, both national, state, and local, in the presence of the numerous complex and distressing problems with which we are now beset, calls for an intelligent, determined, and nation-wide effort to improve both the quality of citizen thinking and citizen action. Somehow, and at whatever cost, "the implicit capacity for worthy and effective participation in the state," must be converted into a positive and active citizenship that rep-

resents a true understanding of the nature of the organized democratic community and its problems, a real and active interest in public affairs, unselfish devotion to the public welfare, and, more than all perhaps, the ability to coöperate with other citizens and with public officials in constructive efforts to solve community problems.

Upon first thought, the problem appears to be so immense that it is quite overwhelming. The fact is, however, that the nation today is full of organized groups which, if they could adequately visualize the objectives that must be achieved, and could lay aside self-interest, and could cease to work at cross purposes, and develop effective coöperation, would be able virtually to accomplish the task of converting "implicit citizen capacity" into competent citizenship in less than a generation.

It is against the background of these teeming, and sometimes selfishly motivated, and often conflicting social groups that the merits and possibilities of the citizens' council plan can to the best advantage be considered and appraised.

Its motive is purely the public interest, and its method is to set up local citizen groups or councils, composed of representatives of all responsible social service organizations of the community, and other interested citizens. And its objective is to promote competent and timely citizen action through carefully planned efforts to stimulate individual and collective thinking upon current problems of government and citizenship, particularly the problems of local government, thus helping to create a body of informed opinion with respect to those problems and active organized coöperation with public officials in solving those problems, and still further to emphasize and to help to carry on those services which lie outside the province of government, but which nevertheless are fundamental to the welfare of the civilized community.

The feeling that there is need of a nation-wide effort in the interest of a better citizenship on some such lines as is proposed by the citizens' council plan is deep and widespread. Evidence that it exists and is growing in hundreds of communities both north and south and east and west, can readily be supplied by those who have taken the trouble to investigate. To capitalize that feeling, and to direct it through organized channels that will make it effective in the interest of a better brand of citizenship, is the broad purpose of the citizen council plan.

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The need for citizen action is evident. Three examples will illustrate some of the problems involved. These are: 1. The attitude of the public toward long-time social planning; 2. The specific alignment of community thinking into special group areas; 3. The numerous instances in which the citizen is required to render a judgment with respect to fundamental problems. . . . The organization of citizens in groups that are willing to face the facts and that are competent to render unbiased, intelligent, and constructive judgments on fundamental problems, is the urgent need in every community. This is the only guarantee of rational citizen action.

Alonzo G. Grace
University of Rochester

# Progress in City Management

The twenty-ninth year since the council-manager plan of municipal government was inaugurated in Staunton, Virginia, finds 438 cities and 8 counties so governed in this country and 19 communities in foreign countries, a total of 465, according to a directory just published by the International City Managers' Association. A total of twenty-one cities and two counties adopted the plan in 1934 and 1935.

Nearly one in every five cities of over 10,000 population in the United States is now operating under council-manager government. (Over 2,000 of the 6,251 cities with over a thousand people cannot adopt manager charters without special action of state legislatures.)

Michigan has the greatest number of council-manager cities—forty-six.

Sixty of these 438 cities have been under the council-manager plan for twenty years. Texas has the most of these—nine.

In twenty-seven years, only twenty-one cities have abandoned the plan. During the last five years there were five cities, one town, and one village which abandoned it, out of a total of fifty-five referenda.

The council-manager plan is most popular in cities from 50,000 to 100,000, 28 per cent of all cities in this population group operating under it. Twenty per cent of the cities in the 25,000 to 50,000 group, 18 per cent of those over 100,000 and of those in the 10,000 to 25,000 population class, 9 per cent of the cities from 2,500 to 10,000 and 2 per cent of those from 1,000 to 2,500 have council-manager government. Seven towns and villages under 1,000 population have managers.

Cincinnati, Ohio, a manager city since 1925, is the largest in the "big city" class under this form of government. Polk City, Florida, with a population of 222, is the smallest.

Acceptance of the council-manager form of government in the past twenty years, it is commented, marks the decline of the commission plan. During the decade 1911-20, 35 per cent of all new charters approved in eleven home rule states, where cities are free to adopt one of several forms of government, were of the council-manager type, while in the next decade, 1921-30, the percentage was 71.

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# You and Your Government

The thirteenth series of YOU AND YOUR GOVERNMENT radio broadcasts on "The Constitution in the 20th Century," is now on the air each Tuesday evening, from 7:45 to 8:00 P. M., eastern standard time, over a nation-wide network of the National Broadcasting Company. Coming programs are listed below:

**February 11**—"Curbing the Court," Edward S. Corwin, Professor of Jurisprudence, Princeton University; Former President, American Political Science Association.

**February 18**—"Property Rights as Obstacles to Progress," Francis W. Coker, Professor of Political Science, Yale University; Past President, American Political Science Association.

**February 25**—"The Constitution as the Guardian of Property Rights," William J. Donovan, Former Assistant U. S. Attorney General.

**March 3**—"Freedom of the Press," Chester H. Rowell, Editor, *San Francisco Chronicle*.

**March 10**—"Powers of the National Government," Walter F. Dodd, Lawyer; Professor of Law, Yale University.

**March 17**—"Administrative Lawmaking," O. R. McGuire, Counsel to U. S. Comptroller General; Chairman, American Bar Association's Committee on Administrative Law.

This series is being presented by the Committee on Civic Education by Radio of the National Advisory Council on Radio in Education and the American Political Science Association, in coöperation with the American Academy of Political and Social Science. For further information, write to the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 3457 Walnut Street, Philadelphia.

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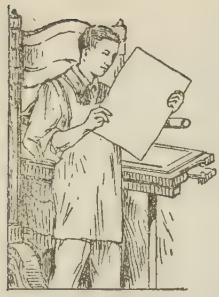

# NEWS OF THE MONTH

NOTES AND EVENTS
*Edited by H. M. Olmsted*

**Permanent Registration Under Attack in California.**—The continuance of permanent registration in California is threatened. The 1935 legislative session submitted a constitutional amendment to be voted on at the general election of 1936 to give the legislature the power to revert to periodic registration. Apparently as a part of a plan to speed the return to periodic listing of the voters, an act was passed by the same session to require a complete re-registration immediately after January 1, 1936.

The agitation for the change is difficult to trace to its source. Permanent registration has operated under difficult circumstances, particularly in Los Angeles County. Depression conditions have brought about frequent changes of residence and from January 1, 1932, to the end of 1935, there were 1,500,000 registration transfers on account of changes of residence. In 1934 alone there were 432,655 such changes; in 1930, only 98,850. The total registration in the county in November 1934 was approximately 1,300,000. In the heat of the 1934 gubernatorial campaign, charges of wholesale fraudulent registration in the county were made without, however, questioning the integrity of the registrar of voters. They apparently had their roots in campaign strategy rather than sentiment for purity in elections, but the charges were widely publicized and were used to justify the action taken by the legislature in 1935. The County Clerks' Association urged a return to periodic registration, but substantial rumor has it that the real pressure came from interests which had lost business as a result of the adoption of permanent registration. Whatever the source of the pressure may be, the state faces the probability of a return to periodic registration without an impartial and competent determination of the actual functioning of the permanent procedure.

V. O. Key, Jr.
University of California at Los Angeles

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**Kentucky Contemplates Reorganization.**—Governor Chandler of Kentucky in his address following the convening of the state legislature, proposed an "audit and survey" of the state government as a basis for reorganization, and the calling of a special session in February to deal solely with the subject of reorganization. He also proposed, among other matters, the repeal of the state sales tax, coöperation with the federal government concerning old-age pensions and other social security legislation, the single primary system, and the consideration of a special session, to follow that on reorganization, for the purpose of determining revenue sources and amounts and improving the tax system.

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**Constitutional Convention for Rhode Island.**—Governor Theodore F. Green of Rhode Island has proclaimed a referendum on March 10 to decide whether a constitutional convention will be held. The senate approved the convention bill by one vote, cast by the lieutenant governor as presiding officer, and the assembly concurred 57 to 42. Thus, another of the objectives of the Democratic administration which came into power in 1935, namely, to modernize the constitution, has made progress. One concession made in the bill was that the representation of the towns shall not be decreased; but this is offset by the lack of restriction on represen-

tation of the cities. The convention will have 127 delegates.

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**Legislative Services.**—Plans have been completed by the New York State Conference of Mayors to keep cities and first and second class villages informed about municipal legislation and to coöperate with the legislature in the preparation and consideration of all bills affecting the administration of city and village affairs. All general bills concerning such municipalities are referred to the general legislative committee of the conference for study and action. This committee meets once a week during the legislative session. If it is not certain that it can correctly represent the majority of the municipalities on any measure, the bill is referred to the municipalities for instruction. A weekly bulletin summarizing each such bill introduced the preceding week is sent to the mayors of cities and the clerks of villages.

The New York Legislative Service, of which Miss Elisabeth Scott is director, with headquarters at 309 East 34th Street, New York City, furnishes, for a fee, information on all important New York State legislation, particularly for taxpayer and civic groups, and has an able board of editors in various fields.

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**State Aid for Libraries.**—Local public libraries received increased state aid during 1935, according to reports made at the recent conference of the American Library Association in Chicago.

It was pointed out that this "is due in part to the adoption by various states of tax limitation laws—notably Indiana, Michigan, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Washington, and West Virginia—which impaired the ability of cities to maintain libraries." Twelve states reported increased appropriations to their state library agencies.

Illinois was given prominence because of the recent legislative appropriation of $600,000 to replace depleted book stocks in some 270 public libraries of the state.

The council of the association expressed itself in resolution as believing that increased demand for library services, coupled with reduced library support from local units of government, emphasizes the need for financial help from other than local sources. State aid was also described as tending to equalize the distribution of library facilities.

The association also adopted a plan for surveys of public library administration, restricting such surveys to instances where they are officially requested, where the cost will not come from the association's budget, and where the personnel and conduct of the survey, and the resulting public reports, shall be under the association's control.

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**State Planners Hold Conference.**—Representatives of thirty-one state planning boards and three regional boards—Pacific Northwest, Tennessee Valley, and New England—attended the conference on state planning administration called by the American Society of Planning Officials in Chicago recently.

It was generally agreed that the state planning board, acting as an advisory body to the legislature and the governor, should collect data on the natural and human resources of the state, help to coördinate the planning studies of the individual state departments and make recommendations to the legislature and governor on the basis of the carefully collected and analyzed data looking toward the proper development of the state.

From the reports submitted at the conference, it appeared that in almost every case the planning board first undertook to inventory the land, water, and mineral resources of the state, thus sometimes presenting to the citizens for the first time a picture of what has been happening to the resources and to the people of those states.

The conference adopted a resolution that Congress enact a bill now pending before it providing for the creation of a permanent national planning board. In thirty-three of the states planning boards have been made permanent by legislation.

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**Manager Plan Developments.**—Mayor G. G. McGeer of Vancouver, British Columbia, a city of 117,217 population, in his proposed plans for 1936, has urged that the city council discuss the idea of council-manager government.

In Des Moines high school students are circulating petitions for the adoption of the manager plan. An organization meeting was recently held at which students were assigned

to certain precincts for the obtaining of signatures. Nearly ten thousand signatures are required.

In Erie County, New York, containing the city of Buffalo, a proposed council-manager charter recently made public would organize the county as a single metropolitan governmental unit.

In Westchester County, New York, the Commission on Government has outlined a plan of county organization, providing for an appointive manager, which will be submitted shortly to the legislature for approval.[1]

Vinton, Va., (3610) adopted the manager plan on January 14 by a vote of 136 to 115. The charter must be enacted into law by the legislature.

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**Mayors Ask Federal Work for Three Million Employables.**—Representatives of the United States Conference of Mayors on January 13 asked Congress to provide an appropriation of $2,340,000,000 for the Works Progress Administration to furnish work for three million persons in the 1936-1937 fiscal year, no appropriation for WPA having been made at the time. The mayors estimated that the present federal work program has taken 3,200,000 from the relief rolls. The request stated:

"The serious problem confronting the cities, counties, and states, now that the government has embarked on a policy of discontinuing direct relief grants, is that of providing adequately for the relief population not cared for under the federal work program. In this category we find that the existing city, county, and state relief load can be fairly estimated at two million cases, embracing between seven and nine million persons. The reports made to us indicate, however, that of this load there are at least *500,000 employable cases, involving close to two million persons, who have not yet been and will not be absorbed by the present WPA, CCC, PWA or other activities.* Our reports conclusively indicate that it is an impossibility for the cities, counties, and states to carry this 500,000 load of employable relief cases in addition to meeting the full and complete costs for care of the unemployable group. And to this burden there must also be added about 22 per cent of the cost of the WPA program, which is the national average of city contributions. . . .

"Assuming (1) that the funds for the CCC and PWA included in the regular budget will be provided, (2) that carry-over of present funds other than WPA will keep some people working during 1936-1937, and (3) that private industry will continue to absorb additional persons from the relief rolls—assuming all these, we are of the unanimous opinion that it is essential for WPA to be given sufficient funds to provide work for at least *three million bona fide employable relief cases which would take care of twelve million men, women and children.*"

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**New York Mayors Seek Home Rule for Relief.**—The New York State Conference of Mayors and Other Municipal Officials on January 8 recommended to the governor and legislature that home relief, now under state supervision, be made a matter of local administration, subject only to such state supervision as is necessary to insure that the state's share of the cost is properly spent. That share is now 40 per cent and the mayors are asking that it be increased to 50 per cent.

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**Police Progress in 1935.**—Extension of police training is counted the most outstanding achievement in the police field last year by the *Police Chiefs' News Letter,* official bulletin of the International Association of Chiefs of Police. The national police training school of the Federal Bureau of Investigation graduated twenty-five state, county, and municipal police officials from its first session, and its second school opens early this year. New training courses inaugurated included those in Kentucky and West Virginia, which were worked out by police officials and the state leagues of municipalities. The Pennsylvania state police school was thrown open to county and municipal police officers. Short course programs were continued in New York, Virginia, Kansas, Northwestern, and Ohio State Universities, Hobart College, and other institutions.

Radio systems were extended and the Associated Police Communication Officials, organized during the year, developed a plan for interstate radio communication which has been indorsed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

[1]For further information on charter revision for New York counties see page 102.

**Outstanding Civil Service Gains in Past Year.**—The four most significant accomplishments in the civil service field in 1935, according to the January issue of the Civil Service Assembly *News Letter,* were the publication of the findings and recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry on Public Service Personnel; the inauguration of a two-year campaign by the National League of Women Voters for the merit system in government; the adoption of local civil service provisions by a number of cities and counties in the United States, including Bridgeport, Conn.; Clearwater and Jacksonville, Fla.; Jefferson County, Birmingham, and Bessemer, Ala.; Memphis, Tenn.; Waco and El Paso, Texas; Flint and Dearborn, Mich.; and San Diego County, Calif.; and the establishment of a graduate school of public administration at Harvard University. There were also steady advances in recruiting, classification, service rating and other technical personnel functions.

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**Progress in Rural Zoning.**—The control of rural land uses by county zoning, with lower governmental costs as one result, is not only gaining in popularity in northern Wisconsin, where it was first tried out, but in 1935 laws on rural zoning were passed in three states—Michigan, Indiana, and Tennessee—according to the American Society of Planning Officials. Eight other states—California, New York, Maryland, Wisconsin, Washington, Virginia, Mississippi, and Illinois—have some type of county planning or zoning, but Wisconsin has used hers most widely. There about five million acres in twenty counties have been placed in restricted land use areas, and four other counties are studying zoning ordinances.

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**Fellowships in Traffic Control and Administration.**—The Bureau for Street Traffic Research in Harvard University, which provides basic research in connection with traffic accidents and congestion, and training in the technical and administrative problems of traffic regulation, announces the availability of fifteen graduate fellowships in the field of street and highway traffic control and administration. This expansion of the training activities of the bureau has been made possible through grants to Harvard University by the Automobile Manufacturers Association. Two new courses in traffic control are also being instituted.

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**National Housing Act Stimulates Zoning and Planning.**—Planning of community growth and more widespread adoption of zoning laws are among developments related to the operation of the national housing act, according to Stewart McDonald, federal housing administrator, who states that although the insurance of dwelling mortgages and modernization credit loans remains the current chief activity under the act, there is substantial evidence that the rules and regulations of the federal housing administration regarding property standards and the rating of both property and neighborhood result in greater community attention to zoning.

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**Non-federal Public Employees Organize.**—The organizing convention of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees was held in Chicago in December, attended by officers of existing organizations of public employees. Thirty-two delegates from as far north as Minnesota and as far south as Georgia, were present, according to the *News Letter* of the Civil Service Assembly. Mr. Arnold Zander, executive secretary of the Wisconsin State Employees Association, was elected president, and Mr. Roy Kubista is secretary-treasurer. The national headquarters of the association will be at Madison, Wisconsin.

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**Seventeen Governmental Associations Given New Headquarters in Chicago.**—The erection and maintenance of a building to house the national headquarters of seventeen associations of public officials and other groups professionally concerned with public administration have been made possible by a grant of one million dollars to the University of Chicago by the Spelman Fund. The new building will be erected on university property, on the south front of the Midway, at the southeast corner of Kenwood Avenue and Sixtieth Street.

The organizations which will occupy it are: Public Administration Clearing House, central agency of the group, American Legislators' Association, American Municipal Association, American Public Welfare Association, American Society of Municipal Engineers, American

Society of Planning Officials, Civil Service Assembly of the United States and Canada, Council of State Governments, Governmental Research Association, International Association of Public Works Officials, International City Managers' Association, Municipal Finance Officers' Association, National Association of Housing Officials, National Association of Assessing Officers, and Public Administration Service, the latter a research, consulting, and publications service jointly maintained by all the other organizations. A joint reference library is similarly maintained. In addition, the Council of State Governments acts as the secretariat for the National Association of Attorneys-General, the National Association of Secretaries of State, the Tax Revision Council, and the Interstate Commission on Crime. Other similar groups have indicated interest in moving their headquarters to the Midway.

The associations now occupy leased offices at 850 E. Fifty-eighth St. It is not expected that the new building will be ready before eighteen months.

## COUNTY AND TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENT

*Edited by Paul W. Wager*

**New York State—Town Officers School.**—An experiment in the education of town officers for their duties was inaugurated at Rochester, New York, December 13 and 14, when some six hundred officers of towns in nine counties in that city's vicinity gathered for two days of discussion and instruction in their duties. The experiment was conducted jointly by the Association of Towns in New York State and the *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*. It grew out of a suggestion by Frank C. Moore, executive secretary of the town association and a member of the New York State Commission for the Revision of the Tax Laws. Mr. Moore had been told by the state comptroller that most of the illegal acts of local officials were the result of lack of knowledge rather than of intent. He believed that if such mistakes could be reduced the efficiency and economy of town government could be increased.

Appropriate officials from the state comptroller's office, the state highway department, and the state tax commission, regional TERA directors, Cornell and University of Rochester professors, and local town officials with established experience and competence in particular offices were induced to give instruction and lead discussions. A general session for town boards as a whole took up the first morning; in the afternoon separate sessions were held for town supervisors, justices of the peace, and town clerks. On the second day separate sessions were held for highway superintendents, assessors and tax collectors, and welfare officers. Local state senators and assemblymen were luncheon guests the first day. Sessions were held in the Chamber of Commerce building, chamber officials, officers of the town association and editors of the *Democrat and Chronicle* cooperating in arrangements. Both sponsors and town officers who attended felt their expectations of the value of the school had been more than met. Officers from towns in Monroe, Orleans, Genesee, Wyoming, Livingston, Yates, Ontario, Seneca, and Wayne Counties were invited. A local chairman in each county assisted in arrangements and organized attendance. Other schools in other sections of the state are projected by the town association in coöperation with other newspapers, mainly of the Gannett group of which the *Democrat and Chronicle* is a member.

HAROLD W. SANFORD
*Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*

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**New York State—New County Charter Proposals.**—The Democratic Club of *Erie County* has submitted a proposed charter which would combine the county, the city of Buffalo and all the other towns and municipal corporations of the county into a single unit under one general government, though with certain important reservations for the government of the outlying towns. For the metropolitan city, the name of Greater Buffalo or Metropolitan Buffalo is proposed. The new council would have ten members, six from the present city and one from each of the four new boroughs which would be created. The office of sheriff would be abolished and the administrative functions of the new city would be handled by nine general departments whose chiefs would be appointive and under the city manager. The present towns (townships) would retain their present names, boundaries, and local administration. They

would not be subject to taxation for any metropolitan or county services except their share of the principal and interest of the present county debt. The same autonomy would be preserved to the incorporated villages. Certain functions, however, which are or should be county-wide in their scope would be allocated to the proposed metropolitan government. Among such functions would be the activities of a planning commission with power, a traffic control board, a single welfare agency, a central board of assessors with local deputies, and a single tax collection system.

Erie County also has an official charter group known as the Erie County Survey Commission, appointed by the legislature in 1933. Its final recommendations have not been issued but a preliminary report submitted last year recommends that the county board of supervisors be reduced in number from fifty-four members to eighteen; that it be stripped of its administrative and executive powers and confined to legislative functions; and that a county executive and a comptroller be elected by popular vote.

In *Westchester County* the Commission on Government, after two years of study, has outlined a plan of county organization which will be submitted in bill form to the legislature for approval. This plan will reduce the membership of the county board of supervisors from forty-two to ten; the eighteen towns will be consolidated into two large townships. An elective county president and an appointive county manager are provided. Six other major county offices now elective are made appointive with some of their functions consolidated. The report to the supervisors followed the publication of findings of the Institute of Public Administration, which made a survey of government in Westchester to form the basis for charter proposals by the government commission.

A home rule plan of government for *Nassau County* was introduced in the legislature on January 28, by Assemblyman Harold P. Herman at the request of the board of supervisors. It is the first measure prepared in accordance with the so-called Fearon amendment to receive the definite approval of the governing body of any county. It has been devised with particular reference to the needs of Nassau County noted by Governor Lehman in his annual message as exceptional.

The charter is the work of the Nassau County Commission on Governmental Revision appointed by the board of supervisors in December 1934. Earl J. Bennett, former comptroller of the county, is chairman. Dr. Thomas H. Reed, Director of the Consultant Service of the National Municipal League, has been the commission's technical adviser. If passed by the legislature and ratified by the people of Nassau County, the measure will go into effect on January 1, 1938.

Assemblyman Herman, introducer of the bill said: "This bill will give Nassau County a modernized form of government with (1) an elective county executive with complete control over the administrative branch of the government, (2) an executive budget system with ample provision for hearing and publicity, (3) a county-wide court of inferior jurisdiction to replace the justices of the peace, and (4) a unified modern system of assessing property for taxation. It retains the present small board of supervisors of six representing the ancient towns of the county, its members having voting strength in proportion to the population they represent. Besides assessment it centralizes in the county government the functions of public health and public welfare. It puts the special districts, of which there are about 175 in the county, under real control as to their budgets and accounts and provides a method for their consolidation or abolition with the approval of a majority of the people affected. It gives Nassau County adequate powers to deal with the great problems of sewage and water supply which form the greatest menace to the continued growth and development of the county."

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*Optional Legislation.* Several bills to permit the reorganization of county and local government in New York State, to give effect to the county home rule amendment to the constitution which was adopted at the November election, have been introduced into the state legislature which is now in session. The bills, introduced by Senators Buckley, Desmond, and Fearon respectively, are similar in that each recognizes the necessity for the establishment of a county executive and the creation in counties of an adequate budget system to provide control over expenditures. The Desmond bill includes the option of selection of the county legislative body by proportional representation; the others do not.

The bill which at this writing seems most likely to pass is the Buckley bill which was prepared by the New York State Commission for the Revision of the Tax Laws, of which Former Senator Seabury C. Mastick is chairman.

In brief, this bill provides for five basic forms of county government: the county manager plan, the county president plan, the council-manager plan, the council-president plan, and the selective plan.

The county manager plan provides for the continuance of the present board of supervisors and the appointment by it of a county manager to be responsible for the administration of the county business. This executive is to appoint all other county officers and employees, with the exception of the county judge, judge of the children's court, and the district attorney, all of whom are to remain elective officials, and an independent auditor to be selected by the board of supervisors to provide an outside check upon the administration.

The county president plan also provides for the continuance of the present board of supervisors and the establishment of a county president who is to be elected by the voters of the county, serve as chairman of the board of supervisors, and have complete responsibility for the administration of the county business. He will have the power of veto over county laws or resolutions passed by the board of supervisors except that the board by a two-thirds vote may override the veto.

The council-manager plan and the council-president plan are similar to the two plans just outlined save that a small county council is substituted for the present board of supervisors. Under these latter plans, the office of town supervisor is not abolished but the supervisors remain solely as town officials and the legislative business of the county is carried on by the newly created county councils.

The fifth form of government, the selective plan, is an interesting invention under which a county may adopt any one or more of the features embodied in the first four forms of government as well as any of the features which are optional for inclusion in any of the first four forms of government, thus providing the maximum elasticity possible in the direction of permitting counties to improve their governmental organizations as quickly or as gradually as they may desire.

There are also a large number of options which may be exercised with regard to the transfer of functions from the various units of government within the county to each other or to the county government or to the state. Other options provide for the election rather than appointment of certain officials, as sheriff or county clerk; the broadest powers of contract between various units of government; the combination of units with each other in the joint performance of functions; establishment of a county department of health.

One of the features of the bill is the establishment of a county board of assessment review in a county which adopts one of the first four forms.

"It has been the purpose of the Commission, in accordance with instructions of the legislature," Former Senator Mastick explained, "to design alternative forms of county charters so that practically every county in the state can adopt a form to suit its own peculiar conditions and still be within the general plan developed for all counties in the state."

H. P. J.

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**North Carolina—Results of Good Management.**—Durham County is the one county in North Carolina in which the county manager form of government is most nearly realized. Prior to 1930 this county had been borrowing from the banks each year from $200,000 to $500,000 in anticipation of the collection of taxes, and paying from $12,000 to $30,000 a year in interest. Since that time, by careful construction of the annual budget, economy in expenditures, careful buying and taking advantage of commercial discounts, eternal vigilance in the collection of taxes and close daily supervision of budget revenues and expenditures, the county has shifted from the position of borrower to that of lender. Instead of paying out thousands of dollars each year as interest on temporary loans, the county not only has been able to operate since 1930 without the necessity of borrowing money, but it has earned each year from $1,500 to $7,500 on idle money in savings accounts in the official depositories of the county. Aside from the savings effected by operating on a cash basis, the credit of the

county has been greatly strengthened and the market value of its bonds enhanced.

The act of the legislature allowing the prepayment of taxes with liberal discounts also has greatly aided the county in shifting to a cash basis.

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**Montana—Saving Through Merging County Offices.**—An estimated quarter of a million dollars can be saved annually by Montana taxpayers if they will take advantage of the new county offices consolidation laws, according to estimates made by the Montana Taxpayers Association. The Montana county offices consolidation laws started by a vote of the people in 1934, amending the state constitution, and enabling the electors at any general election to vote to consolidate any two or more enumerated county offices. The 1935 session of the Montana legislature provided the means by which the consolidation could take place.

The consolidation is entirely optional and may be initiated by the voters themselves or placed on the general election ballot by the board of commissions.

In estimating the possible savings the Montana Taxpayers Association sent questionnaires to about fifty competent county officers who, through years of experience, were thoroughly familiar with county problems. In answer to these questionnaires, the fifty county officials estimated that savings could be made in three ways: (1) savings in salaries, (2) more efficient use of personnel including deputies and clerks, and (3) the reduction of costs by elimination of excessive duplication.

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**California—Consolidation Pays.**—Los Angeles County, which last year consolidated its forty-six townships into twenty-four units, has demonstrated that money can be saved by reducing the number and increasing the size of governmental units. Roger Jessup, member of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, describes how the California county is now $100,000 ahead, in the current issue of *The Tax Digest,* magazine of the California Taxpayers' Association.

The Los Angeles County township consolidation program was put into effect in January 1935, upon order of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. The County Bureau of Efficiency, which drew up the details of the consolidation, estimated that $91,000 a year would be saved. Actually, however, savings during the first year have totaled more than $100,000. Expenditures for the first six months of 1934, before consolidation, amounted to $231,252. During the first six months of 1935 they were only $173,907—a difference of $57,345.

As proof that the saving is the result of true economy and not merely of retrenchment, County Supervisor Jessup explains that township justice courts and constables' offices are now operating more efficiently than before, even with increased loads. This is a concrete example of what a consolidation program can accomplish. Undoubtedly township consolidation would yield similarly large dividends in many other counties in the country.

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**New Jersey—County Government Costly.**—County government in New Jersey cost $54,568,000 in the year 1935. The cost ranged from $10.60 per capita in Bergen County to $31.34 in Ocean County. The median cost was $14.21 per capita and the average $13.50 per capita.

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**Ohio—Property Tax Limitation Forces Drastic Economies.**—Because of shortage of funds for operating the government of Hamilton County for the ensuing year, the county board made a horizontal cut of 10 per cent in all departmental appropriations and then allocated funds only for the first three months of the year. Economies were effected in the office of the county auditor by the dismissal of two employees of the staff. The office of county sanitary engineer was consolidated with that of county engineer, and twelve of the twenty former employees of the sanitary engineer's office were released at a savings of $30,000.

Butler County commissioners at their first meeting of the year abolished the position of custodian of the court house and made other changes which will effect a saving of approximately $3,000 annually.

A bill has been introduced in the Ohio legislature which would fix the salaries of county relief directors. In counties having less than 50,000 population, the salary would be $125 per month and an additional $10 per month would be paid for each additional 50,000 population.

## TAXATION AND GOVERNMENT

*Edited by Wade S. Smith*

**Leading Cities' Finances Improve.**—Data on the general financial condition of leading American cities, collected under date of January 4 by the *New York Times* and published the following day, show a picture vastly improved over that of a year ago.

"Pay-as-you-go" policies, particularly in regard to the financing of relief needs, drastic efforts to reduce or at least hold level bonded debt totals, decrease in short-term borrowings, increased collections, and reductions for current operation all are credited with a share of the improvement.

Says the *Times*: "Cities which have adopted a pay-as-you-go policy in financing relief expenditures and have struggled to balance their budgets through economies and emergency tax levies appear to be setting the pace in the restoration of high credit rating and par values for municipal bonds.

"Generally speaking, all cities have been materially helped back to financial stability by the nation-wide business recovery, together with the increase in cash farm income and workers' payrolls, all of which have been reflected in better tax collections from holders of city real estate, increases in other city revenues, and large payments of past-due taxes which were defaulted during the depression."

Heading the list of improvements, naturally enough, was New York City. Here tax collections have shown substantial pick-up, the percentage of the 1935 levy remaining uncollected at the end of the year being 15.77 per cent, as compared with 21.22 per cent at the end of 1934. Reduction of short-term and bonded debt and a refunding operation will save the city $11,000,000 in interest charges over a term of years. The 2 per cent sales tax and the public utility tax not only brought in enough to pay the city's share of relief, but the city will "probably have a small surplus for 1936 needs." Nearly $80,000,000 in past-due realty taxes were paid during the year, with about $40,000,000 expected to be paid during January.

Philadelphia cut its budget deficit to $4,500,000, more than half of the deficit at the close of 1934. All receipts exceeded official estimates. Baltimore ended the year with a $1,500,000 surplus in its treasury, representing savings and unspent moneys from the 1935 budget. This city's 1936 budget will be $1,596,000 higher than that for the past year.

Boston, with $23,000,000 in uncollected taxes, expects a budget reduction, less borrowing for maintenance, no increase in tax rate, and a reduction in welfare disbursements for 1936. Tax collections were 2 per cent higher than in 1934. Boston, it will be recalled, was on the eve of launching a pay-your-taxes campaign last winter, when city fathers decided to muddle through without one.

Cleveland, hamstrung under the Ohio 1 per cent tax limitation amendment, faces an estimated operating deficit of from $4,000,000 to $8,000,000. The new administration of Mayor Harry Burton is expected to submit a special levy proposal to raise some $2,000,000 budgetary deficit remaining from the tax program of the old administration, as well as to issue about $7,000,000 of funding bonds for accumulated obligations and debt service.

Detroit officials conservatively estimate an 80 per cent collection of 1935 taxes. Debt service has been consistently met since the refunding agreement of 1933 and further refunding has been arranged during the past year to secure more favorable interest rates.

In Chicago all tax warrants have been retired with the exception of 1934 corporate warrants now in collection and $21,000,000 worth of 1935 warrants recently sold to local banks. The city sold no 1935 warrants for 1935 financing. The 1936 budget, of $122,142,082, is about $8,000,000 lower than that for the year just ended. School salaries were paid throughout 1935, and provision for the same procedure has been made in the 1936 budget.

Low tax delinquency continued to favor San Francisco, which ended 1935 with a lower tax rate, lower bonded debt, and restored pay cuts for employees. The delinquency rate for the first installment in 1935 was 3.33 per cent, as compared with 5.35 a year before. Final delinquency is expected to be about normal.

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**N. Y. Mayors' Conference Seeks City Stability.**—In a program presented to Governor Lehman and the New York State legislature, the New York State Conference of Mayors and Other Municipal Officials asked a

three-point platform for "municipal financial stability". It was:

1. Restriction of municipal borrowing power;

2. A prohibition against state action increasing the cost of local government; and

3. A broader municipal tax base.

The first part of the program requests legislation drastically reducing the period for which bonds may be issued, requiring the first payment on serial bonds to be made within a year of the date of sale, requiring an appropriation the first year from current revenues towards capital improvement costs, prohibiting the construction of special assessment projects if 20 per cent of the parcels in the proposed assessment district have unpaid taxes against them, and prohibiting the issuance of bonds for improvements of less than five years' estimated life.

For broadening the tax base, it was suggested that the state either authorize cities and villages to levy a new tax or itself levy one or more and return the revenue to the municipalities, that no change be made in laws which prescribe the share which municipalities receive from state-collected taxes except to increase the share of liquor taxes to villages, that municipalities receive directly a "fair share" of the motor vehicle and gasoline taxes to be used exclusively for construction and repair of streets, bridges, and for snow removal, that the highway law be amended to permit the state to spend funds within municipalities and to secure federal aid also, and that the state constitution be amended to provide that any future state statute increasing the cost of municipal government either be optional with the municipalities or the state provide funds or local taxes other than taxes on property to pay the additional cost.

The report deplored the fact that the relief load of cities is "again on the increase."

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**New Jersey Plan for $27,857,121 Saving.**—New Jersey's legislative budget advisory committee, dominated by "Clean Government" Republicans, submitted to Governor Hoffman early in January a plan to carry out its platform of "economies before new taxes" by saving nearly $28,000,000 in next year's state budget.

In addition to looking to the municipalities for $5,000,000, the plan would use some $5,506,702 free surplus of the state general fund (estimated, next June 30), $3,500,000 of federal security aid money, and nearly $500,000 of estimated revenue increases in the 1936-37 fiscal year, while also effecting operating economies of some $1,250,000 in state departments in the first half of the year. It would reduce the highway department's debt service by $2,987,526, effect a $2,800,000 reduction in state aid for new road construction, effect other miscellaneous reductions totaling about $1,335,000 in the department, eliminate over a million dollars by reduction of "matched services" for federal aid, and cut out $3,635,405 by placing the highways on a semi-maintenance basis.

Budget requests for the 1936-37 fiscal year were reduced by the committee from $31,302,663 to $26,193,309, salaries and wages from $13,378,765 to $11,822,045, other recurring expenses from $6,298,149 to $5,507,903, and extraordinary and capital expenditures from $1,474,991 to $931,142. The committee promised to submit five bills introducing permanent economies in the state operation.

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**Centralized Assessment and Collection for New York Units Offered.**—In a bill providing for optional forms of county government introduced in the New York State legislature on January first by State Senator Thomas C. Desmond, provision is made for the consolidation of all tax assessing and collecting procedures under the county commissioner of finance.

The provision is contained as an optional feature of the bill, and if adopted by a county adopting one of the bill's main forms of county government would permit the county to make a single assessment of property valuation which would be used for all tax levies by all units within the county. It would also permit the county to serve as the single collecting agency, abolishing the duplicating array of collectors and receivers of taxes in towns, villages, and special districts.

Another optional provision of the bill would enable the use of a single unified county budget, in which would be included the appropriations and anticipated revenues of all towns and special districts within the county, and over which the commissioner of finance, as budget director, would have budgetary control in regard to requiring estimates and work programs.

## PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

*Edited by George H. Hallett, Jr.*

**P. R. and Cincinnati's Mayor.**—Newspapers throughout the country carried the story that Cincinnati went without a mayor from January 1 to January 8, when Russell Wilson, the distinguished leader of the City Charter Committee councilmen, was elected by the council for a third term. Because this situation has been interpreted as an argument against proportional representation, by which the 4-4-1 council was chosen,[1] it may be well to consider it with some care.

At the first meeting Rev. Herbert S. Bigelow, elected as an unattached independent at the P. R. election last fall and holding the balance of power between the Charter Committee and Republican organization delegations, announced terms on which he would cooperate with either side in organizing the council. Neither side was willing to meet these terms and two meetings were held without a mayor, who is chosen by the council as its president under the city manager plan, being chosen. The vote on each ballot was 4-4-1. Meanwhile, no great harm was done, for City Manager Dykstra, in charge of the actual administration of city business, serves indefinitely unless removed by the council, which no one proposed.

At the third meeting Mr. Wilson received Mr. Bigelow's vote under a compromise agreement which gave Mr. Bigelow most of what he had asked to further the municipal ownership and tax reform ideas of himself and his constituents and which nevertheless committed the Charter group to nothing inconsistent with its principles and ideals. Mayor Wilson himself announced the terms of the compromise:

1. Appointment of Mr. Bigelow as chairman of the public utilities committee. The other two members are Willis Gradison, able Republican opponent of municipal ownership, and Mayor Wilson, who says that he would like to avoid municipal ownership but in a choice between municipal ownership of utilities and utility ownership of municipalities would prefer the former.

2. Full coöperation with Mr. Bigelow in determining all the pertinent facts as to the availability of TVA power and other utility questions, with the assistance of the city's legal and engineering staffs and, if necessary, outside experts.

3. Full publicity on the facts so obtained.

4. Coöperation with other cities in an attempt to secure city home rule in taxation. (Mr. Bigelow wants this to open the way for heavy taxation of land values, as distinguished from improvements. The Charter members do not commit themselves to any specific use of home rule.)

5. Restoration of salary cuts of city employees as soon as practicable and further increases for any who are below standard wage scales. (The Charter members do not believe that present city scales are too high even at the top and therefore decline the reductions in the higher brackets which Mr. Bigelow suggested.)

6. No interference with the civil service or with the administrative responsibilities of the city manager. (This has always been a cardinal principle of the City Charter Committee. It is the one principle on which most change was expected by many in case the Republican organization gained control.)

This would seem like a reasonable adjustment of differences between groups which had much more in common than kept them apart, but the fact that Mr. Bigelow was able to exact any terms at all has been cited as an argument against the minority representation which put him in the council. This argument was considered in a letter to the New York *Times*, which the *Times* printed nearly in full on January 15:

To the Editor of the New York *Times*:

As one of those working for the adoption of proportional representation in New York City, as a means of giving fairer representation to different groups of opinion instead of the present absurd distortions, I was of course keenly interested in your editorial of January 11, entitled "'P. R.' in Cincinnati."

You outline as if damaging to the case for P. R. the present situation in Cincinnati, in which the council is split 4-4-1 among three groups and in which the lone independent was able to secure the acceptance of his terms by the City Charter Committee group in return for his vote to re-elect Mayor Russell Wilson.

This situation appears unfortunate only when compared with the united good government majorities of the last ten years under P. R. and not when compared with the situations which preceded the advent of P. R. or with the situation which would have existed

[1] A discussion of the election was carried in this department last month.

this time had it not been for P. R. In the old days the good government forces, because divided by national party lines, got little or no representation, and this year's election presented a situation where pretty clearly there would have been an end to the good government regime had it not been for P. R.

In the fall election the independent Charter slate polled slightly fewer votes than the Republican organization slate, neither one, however, having a clear majority of the votes because of the substantial vote which went to Rev. Herbert S. Bigelow. If Mr. Bigelow had been running under a plurality plan of election the Republican organization would have elected its slate on a minority vote. If he had not been running it is still probable that the Republican organization would have elected its slate, because more of the surplus votes which Mr. Bigelow did not need to elect him were transferred eventually to Republican organization candidates than to Charter candidates, indicating that the organization would have had more than an even split of those votes if he had not been running. Proportional representation made it possible for those former supporters of the reform government who had become dissatisfied with it to elect an independent enemy of the spoils system as a minority representative instead of going over lock, stock, and barrel to the enemy as the only effective means of protest.

As a result, instead of having a gradual or speedy return to the spoils system, we have for another two years a continuation of the merit system and the general course of good government that has made Cincinnati famous under P. R. Instead of upsetting the apple cart completely those who were dissatisfied with what they considered the too conservative attitude of the City Charter Committee have been able to modify it in certain respects in which they believed it needed modification, leaving its important virtues unblemished.

The compromise which the Charter Committee has made—and after all there is never any possibility of a cohesive majority under any situation without some compromise on non-essentials—was not a compromise on major principles. There can be no harm in investigating a utility situation and no pledge has been given as to final action. Since Mr. Bigelow is himself a man of high principle, however much one may disagree with him, and has been known for years as an inveterate enemy of the spoils system, there is every reason to anticipate that Cincinnati's good government regime will continue in full force. For this P. R. is clearly responsible.

When one compares the essentially wholesome if temporarily disquieting situation in Cincinnati with the situation in Congress, in which a minority (whether one agrees with it or not) has been able to hold a whip over nearly all the members on the bonus issue because it holds the balance of power in nearly every district under the plurality plan, it should not be difficult to see that giving minorities their fair share of influence and no more is a consummation much to be desired.

Sincerely yours,

GEORGE H. HALLETT, JR.,
*Secretary of the Citizens Union*

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**The Last British Election Strengthens the Case for P. R.**—(*Excerpts from "The General Election and Constitutional Reform," by John H. Humphreys, secretary of the British P. R. Society, in the Contemporary Review, London, for January 1936.)*

The election [of the House of Commons on November 13, 1935] illustrated afresh how little room there is under our present electoral system for generous action. A rumour gained currency in the Darwen division that Mr. Baldwin desired the return of Sir Herbert Samuel to the House of Commons. Pressed for a denial, Mr. Baldwin sent the message demanded by the party organization that he desired the return of the Conservative candidate. It is difficult to believe that Mr. Baldwin would not have welcomed the return to the House of Commons of so able a parliamentarian as Sir Herbert Samuel, but the electoral system placed Mr. Baldwin in a dilemma. In a single-member constituency only one man, only one party, can win, and Mr. Baldwin, in accordance with the rules of the game, supported the nominee of his party. Similarly the rules of the game constrained Sir John Simon, Mr. Walter Runciman, and Mr. Hore-Belisha, National Liberal members of the Government, to support Conservatives where these were standing in opposition to Mr. Isaac Foot and to other Opposition Liberal candidates, formerly their colleagues. This course caused much resentment. In Glasgow feeling rose high when the official Labour

Party attacked the constituencies held by Mr. Maxton and his I.L.P. colleagues. In constituencies where Opposition Labour was opposed to National Labour, the contests were not only bitter, but were marked by a persistent suppression of speech. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, Mr. J. H. Thomas, and Mr. Malcolm MacDonald were on many occasions unable to make themselves heard.

*Minorities Suppressed*

Suppression of speech at election meetings is contrary to the spirit of democracy. But does not our electoral system lead to suppression of speech still more serious because enduring for a period of years? Large numbers of voters may for the lifetime of a Parliament have no one to present their views to the House of Commons. In the eleven southern counties of England, stretching from Kent to Cornwall, the seventy-nine contested constituencies gave the following result:

| Party | Votes | Seats |
|---|---|---|
| Government | 2,068,323 | 77 |
| Labour | 836,573 | 0 |
| Liberal | 320,307 | 2 |

More than 800,000 Labour electors living in the south of England have no spokesmen in the House of Commons. On the other hand the eleven county divisions of Durham are held exclusively by Labour. It is often contended that the incomplete representation of the people in one part of the country is offset by incomplete representation elsewhere. But both Conservative and Labour voters in the south of England have a different experience of life from Conservative and Labour voters in Durham; a truer view of the result is that representation in a full sense of the word is incomplete; there is no real compensation in human values.

*Distorted Representation*

In point of mere numerical strength, the failure of the principle of compensating errors leaps to the eye in a comparison of the votes cast and the seats won in the country as a whole. The figures for the 575 contested seats in Great Britain and Ireland were as follows:

| Party | Votes | Seats | No. of votes per seat obtained | Seats in proportion to votes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Government | 11,789,575 | 405 | 29,000 | 308 |
| Labour | 8,325,446 | 141 | 59,000 | 217 |
| Liberal | 1,443,112 | 21 | 69,000 | 38 |
| I.L.P. | 139,517 | 4 | 35,000 | 4 |
| Others | 299,800 | 4 | — | 8 |

Every member of Parliament on the Opposition benches represents on the average twice as many voters as every supporter of the Government. The electoral system reduced Labour representation by over seventy members. It reduced Liberal representation by nearly one-half (without taking into account the fact that the country was, as far as the Liberal party was concerned, only one-quarter contested). What would have happened under proportional representation? There were forty uncontested seats, of which the Government held twenty-six. Including a liberal estimate of the voters likely to support the successful party in each uncontested area, the Government's majority, instead of being some 250, would, on a strictly proportionate basis, have been less than sixty. . . . The strength of the Opposition would have been increased by nearly 100 members. Moreover, it would have been strengthened in its personnel. The leader of a party like Sir Herbert Samuel would have been elected. Prominent members of the Labour party, now defeated, would have been returned to Parliament.

*Elections Now a Gamble*

A marked feature of the present system of election is the uncertainty of its working. It is irregular even in its irregularities. With the same mass of voters supporting the various parties, the election result might well have been very different from what it was, so much does the net result depend upon the way in which political forces are distributed. In southern England, the 836,000 Labour voters secured no representation because they were spread fairly uniformly over the whole of the area. In the West Riding of Yorkshire the same number of Labour voters, fortunate in possessing local majorities in certain areas, won twenty-four seats. In London a smaller number of Labour voters, namely 760,000, won twenty-two seats. If the voters of the different parties had been distributed uniformly over London, the Government could have won every London seat with a comfortable majority of 2,000. That would have been a triumph, perhaps, for the successful party, but not for democracy.

Mr. J. S. Middleton, Secretary of the Labour Party, speaking in London a few days after the election, made the following comparison of Labour successes in recent elections.

"Ours is an extraordinary electoral system," he said. "In 1929, Labour, with 7,750,000 votes, had 300 seats; in 1931, with 6,250,000 votes, it had forty-six seats; whilst this year, with 8,250,000 votes, it secured 154 seats. I venture to say that there is no bigger gamble on earth than a British general election." The comment recalls some words of Mr. J. L. Garvin, who, in the *Observer*, described our electoral system as being "one of the most discreditable electoral systems in the world." "We stake upon a gambler's chance," he said, "the control of the House of Commons, and the management of Imperial and Foreign affairs, as well as social." . . .

It is the composition of the House of Commons that shapes our history today, that determines decisions on vital national and international questions. The election result of 1935 will leave its mark. The future of the League of Nations was an issue in the election. The forces in this country that are under-represented in Parliament are those which are strongest in their attachment to the League of Nations. Suppose the majority of the Government had been but sixty instead of 250, and that the pro-League forces amongst the Conservatives, as well as among the Opposition parties, had been fully represented in numbers and in personnel. Would not this have had an influence—even a determining influence—on the attitude taken by the British Government in matters affecting the League? Would not a fairly representative Parliament have conveyed to foreign nations a truer picture of public opinion? Would it not have influenced the attitude of the Government in the negotiations with France and Italy which immediately followed the election?

*A Practical Solution*

A common objection to the fair representation of political forces in the House of Commons is that it would, or might, bring about a great increase in parties. The proposals recommended for Great Britain afford little, if any, ground for an objection of this kind. The constituencies will be self-contained units corresponding in many cases with natural and administrative divisions. Generally speaking, the constituencies will return from three to five members each. There will be no room for any group which does not command the support of a very considerable proportion of the voters in a given area. Lord Ullswater [chairman of the Speaker's Conference on Electoral Reform in 1930,] referring to these proposals in the House of Lords, said:

> The Committee spent at least ten meetings over this, and at last a decision was taken. That resolution would to a considerable extent meet the grievances which the Conference had set out to try and overcome, namely, the gross under-representation of great bodies of citizens on whom the franchise had been conferred.

The resolution in question declared that any electoral reform should include proportional representation with the single transferable vote. The proposals are designed to meet substantial grievances in a practical way.

*University Elections for the House of Commons*

In the University elections, we have examples of proportional representation at work on a limited scale. For a long period prior to the introduction of proportional representation in 1918, all the Universities entitled to return members elected none but Conservatives. The majority monopolised the representation. The use of P.R. in 1929 enabled Miss Rathbone to be elected as one of the representatives for the Combined English Universities by virtue of the support of a large minority exceeding one-third of the whole. In the general election of 1935, Mr. A. P. Herbert was returned in spite of the fact that the Conservatives, who were in a majority, nominated two candidates; Mr. Herbert was returned, like Miss Rathbone, by virtue of the support of a number of voters exceeding one-third of the whole. The success of the transferable vote system in producing a more complete representation in the University constituencies is the more noteworthy in that there is little scope for proportionality when no more than two members are to be elected; there will be more scope in constituencies returning three, four, or five members. But even in the latter constituencies a candidate, in order to be elected, will have to poll a very considerable number of votes.

*The Outlook for P.R.*

What are the possibilities of proportional representation being adopted by this Parliament? In reply to questions on electoral reform addressed to him by electors in his con-

stituency, Sir Kingsley Wood, Director of the Government Publicity Campaign during the election, stated:

> The experience of the Ullswater Conference has shown that it is difficult to obtain agreement on proposals for electoral reform. If, however, it is decided that a change should be made in the present system of parliamentary election, I would consider favourably proportional representation in preference to any other change.

From the fact that other Conservatives replied in similar terms, it would appear that the statement was framed in an approved form. A number of Labour candidates indicated their agreement with the general proposition that their political opponents, as well as their political friends, were entitled to a fair share of representation, and were willing that an inquiry should be made. The Liberal Party supported proportional representation in their election manifesto. . . .

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**P. R. Proposals in Two Legislatures.**—Representative Christian Herter of Boston has re-introduced in the Massachusetts legislature the bill to make P.R. optional by petition and popular vote for the Boston council and school board and the corresponding Hare system of majority preferential voting (the "alternative vote") optional for the election of the mayor. With it he has introduced a new bill to make the same methods optional by petition and popular vote for cities and towns of over ten thousand population. The Boston bill is once more arousing considerable interest and support.

In the New York legislature Senator Thomas C. Desmond of Newburgh has included P.R. for county boards of supervisors as one of the options in a comprehensive bill to permit reorganizations of county and local government under the new powers of the county home rule amendment to the state constitution approved by the voters in November. This bill will be seriously considered along with less far-reaching bills with similar purpose which do not include P.R. (See also p. 102.)

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**Westchester County Charter Commission.**—In its preliminary report of January 20 to the Westchester County, New York, board of supervisors suggesting a plan for the modernization of local government within the county, the Westchester County Charter Commission (Carl H. Pforzheimer, chairman) endorsed the principle of P.R. but did not recommend its immediate adoption. The report said:

"The Commission believes that all legislative bodies within the county should be so elected as to represent majority, minority, and independent groups in proportion to their voting strength. Apparently this can best be accomplished through giving the citizens the opportunity to vote for several candidates by expressing their first, second, third, and further choices under the system which is known as proportional representation. It is evident, however, that this method of voting cannot be applied to the township councils until it is also applied to the city councils. To do so would enfranchise the minority in one part of a federated county government while the minority remained disfranchised in the other part. In fairness to all, we suggest that township elections be at large until such time as proportional representation also becomes effective in the cities."

The cities have power to adopt P.R. by local law. The commission's reason for wanting to keep election methods uniform in the four cities and the two proposed towns is that the proposed county board of supervisors would be composed of city and town representatives *ex officio*.

## GOVERNMENTAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION NOTES

*Edited by Robert M. Paige*

**American Public Utilities Bureau.**—The director of the Bureau, John Bauer, has just completed a report to the council of the city of Pittsburgh on the "Conditions and Requirements of Modern Mass Transportation in the Pittsburgh Districts." The expiration of the street railway company's franchise on February 1 of this year was the immediate occasion for this survey. The city also felt that the desirability and practicability of shifting mass transportation primarily to gasoline bus operation should be thoroughly investigated at this time.

Some of the findings of this survey are of general interest. Since 1924 street railway revenues have declined over 45 per cent. Notwithstanding a business recovery of about 50 per cent in the Pittsburgh district from the latter months of 1932, street railway revenues

now continue on the low level reached during these months. The increase in passenger travel due to business revival has gone to automobiles.

It is estimated that in the Pittsburgh district buses could be operated for 29 cents per bus-mile, including maintenance and depreciation plus 3 cents for return on total investment or a total over-all cost of 32 cents. Street railway costs in 1934 amounted to 35 cents per car-mile for operating expenses including maintenance and depreciation. If the allowed 6 per cent return on total investment had been earned, the cost per car-mile would have been 14 cents making the total over-all cost per car-mile 49 cents.

The report stresses the economy and flexibility of bus transportation and the comfort of modern buses and recommends that street cars gradually be replaced by buses. Recommendations as to the rate of conversion and the terms which should be incorporated in the new franchise are set forth in considerable detail.

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**Schenectady Bureau of Municipal Research.**—Two recent reports have been published by the Bureau as separate pamphlets. One deals with the cost of living in Schenectady and in Erie, Pennsylvania. The Bureau frequently compares governmental costs in Schenectady with those in Erie, these cities being similar in size and industrial complexion, and realized a need for a detailed, up-to-date study of the cost of living in the two cities. The study revealed that in spite of lower taxes in Erie rents were appreciably higher than in Schenectady. The total cost of living for renters is about 3 per cent *lower* in Schenectady than in Erie. Lower rents, lower coal prices, and lower electric rates more than offset higher prices for food and miscellaneous items. The cost of living for home-owners, however, is estimated to be 5 per cent *higher* in Schenectady because lower coal and electricity prices are not sufficient to offset higher taxes and higher food prices.

Another recent Bureau report brings together forty suggestions for correcting as many inadequacies of the city government. The adoption of a city manager charter makes the time propitious for correcting these defects. The program includes suggestions relating to auditing and long-term financial planning, assessment procedure, purchasing, handling of compensation and damage claims against the city, administration of elections, police and fire protection, etc.

The November and December issues of the Bureau's monthly *Bulletin* dealt with various matters relating to the city manager form of government and the effect which the adoption of the new charter will have upon the organization of the city.

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**Tennessee Taxpayers Association.**—The Association's fourth annual survey of the finances of the state was recently completed and made available in mimeographed form to the governor, state administrative officers, all members of the legislature, and citizens generally including editors and every teacher of government in the high schools, colleges, and universities of the state.

The 1935 survey-report which is similar in content and arrangement to the three preceding association analyses of the state's income and expenditures contains a detailed statistical section comparing expenditures and revenues of the biennium ending 1933, and the biennium ending June 30, 1935, department by department and office by office.

In the section devoted to general comments the Association points out that state expenditures for the 1933-35 biennium have been approximately $10,000,000 less than the expenditures of the two preceding years, and that the budget for the 1935-37 biennium continues this low level of expenditures. Credit is given to the governor and the legislature for the adoption of this economy program. In spite of this fact, however, expenditures are still exceeding revenues.

The Association hails the state's new central accounting system providing controls to keep expenditures within budget allotments as "the greatest forward step taken in the financial management of the state government in the last ten or twelve years." The Association, upon request, participated in the installation of the system which was made effective October 1, 1935. The Association is now urging that the central accounting system be extended to include the coördination of such accounting records as must still be kept in the various state institutions and departments.

In 1923, following a survey of the state by the Institute of Public Administration, the

state passed the reorganization bill which among other things required that the governor and his budget officer prepare and transmit to the legislature a proposed budget. However, the Taxpayers Association has found that actually the state budgets adopted prior to July 1, 1935, were drafted by the finance committees of the successive legislatures. The Association is now advocating the establishment of a budget bureau, headed by a director appointed by the governor for a four-year term at a salary commensurate with a high degree of responsibility. The Association believes that such an office could save from a quarter to a half-million dollars annually.

Reorganization of the revenue collecting machinery of the state is also urged. The reorganization bill of 1923 centralized all revenue agencies in the department of finance and taxation and was a distinctly forward step. But the Association reports that this department "more than any other" was promptly made the catch-all for those employees placed on the payroll for political considerations. The Association finds the present internal organization of the department of finance very unsatisfactory. One basic difficulty is that a separate unit deals with each type of tax. The Association presents a series of recommendations for the complete reorganization of this department.

The Association's report also contains recommendations for setting up centralized purchasing procedures, a system of pre-audit of payrolls and expense accounts, and a system for adequately controlling the use of state-owned automobiles, classification and rating of all state employees, and a complete reorganization of the prison industries.

At the present time the Association is conducting a state-wide survey of local government and is drafting a series of bills designed to correct certain specific defects or difficulties in the administration of existing laws governing the conduct of city and county government. In the spring the Association will hold three conferences on local government problems—in Knoxville, Nashville, and Jackson.

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**Research Division of the Law Department of the City of Chicago.**—The annual report of Chicago's Corporation Counsel tells of the creation early in the fall of 1935 of a research division. Dr. Albert Lepawsky of the political science faculty of the University of Chicago is the director of this division. Although he is devoting only part of his time to this position he has a staff of several full-time assistants, all of whom have had special training in the social sciences and public administration.

One of the first tasks of the research division was the complete reorganization of office routines and records. This reorganization was necessitated by the consolidation of six separate municipal legal agencies under the corporation counsel. The consolidation of these formerly independent legal offices has made possible a better distribution of investigational and legal work among members of the staff and bids fair to save the city money both by reducing legal expenditures and by providing the city with a more adequate legal service.

The law department of any city is one of the most important agencies of internal administrative control. This seems to be particularly true in Chicago. The law department therefore may be a strategic point at which to set up a municipal research unit. The research division has been in existence only a few months, but in addition to its work on the reorganization of the office procedures, it has begun a comprehensive survey of every activity of the law department, and has digested and indexed all opinions prepared by the department during the past six years. A complete revision of the municipal code is contemplated.

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**Municipal Research Department of Ludlow Manufacturing and Sales Company.**—Ludlow, (1930 population, 8,876) is one of twenty-three towns in Massachusetts having what is known as the "representative town meeting" form of government. This form is similar to the more customary "large council" form of city government except that it admits administrative officers to its ranks, lacks certain features that mark the conventional legislative assembly, i. e., it rarely operates through standing committees, lacks procedural requirements and has no responsibility toward any executive and always sits in the presence of its constituents.

John F. Sly, at present director of the Princeton University Local Government Sur-

vey, made a thorough analysis of town government in Massachusetts in 1928. Now E. E. Mariner, director of municipal research of the Ludlow Manufacturing and Sales Company, has brought Mr. Sly's work up to date in so far as it pertains to the representative town meetings. His report analyzes the legal provisions governing precinct voting, the number of elected representatives in the town meeting (this number varies from 54 to 299; the average is 204), the election of members at large, the conduct of meetings, and the holding of special referenda.

Mr. Mariner is now editing a regular bulletin for the local civic association.

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**Institute for Government Research of the Brookings Institution.**—The Institute's sixth comprehensive state survey—of Oklahoma—completed in June 1935, has just been published. Other states surveyed during the past ten years by the Brookings staff are North Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, New Hampshire, and Iowa.

The survey was financed by a fund of $57,000 raised by voluntary contributions from Oklahoma citizens. It was organized and initiated by Arnold Bennett Hall, director of the Institute. When Mr. Hall was forced to retire to his home because of illness, Lewis Meriam assumed the role of acting director for a period of several months. Then A. C. Millspaugh, also of the Brookings staff, was appointed survey director. Other members of the Brookings staff who collaborated on this project were Fred W. Powell, Henry P. Seidemann, and Daniel T. Selko. In addition, a number of specialists were brought in to prepare special sections of the report. Herbert Simpson of Northwestern University studied the tax system with the assistance of Jens P. Jensen of the University of Kansas; L. V. Cavins of the West Virginia State Department of Education prepared the chapters on public school administration; Roy M. Brown of the University of North Carolina prepared the chapter on public welfare administration; James G. Townsend of the United States Public Health Service wrote the section on public health; Edward Middleton of the United States Division of Subsistence Homesteads contributed the chapters on highway administration and Joseph P. Harris of the Committee on Public Administration of the Social Science Research Council, the chapter on election administration.

Some of the major recommendations of the survey relating to administration reorganization are: (1) that the office of state superintendent of public instruction be made appointive by the state board of education instead of elective; (2) that school districts be abolished and county boards of education substituted therefor, such boards to be empowered to appoint the county superintendents of public instruction; (3) that the control of all welfare activities of the state be concentrated in a state board of public welfare; (4) that county welfare activities be centralized in welfare boards named by the county commissioners; (5) that the office of sheriff be made appointive by the district courts; (6) that municipal chiefs of police be appointed by the state department of justice in accordance with a merit system; (7) that a state board of health be created; (8) that the requirement that practically all important appointments of the governor must be confirmed by the senate be eliminated; (9) that county commissioners be elected at large instead of by districts and their salaries reduced or eliminated; (10) that a state personnel board be created and a system of centralized purchasing established.

The complete report, a 500-page document, is being sold for $4 by its publisher, the E. W. Marland Good Government Fund, State Capitol, Oklahoma City.

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**Pennsylvania Economic Council.**—The Council has recently published a revised edition of its report on local governmental units in Pennsylvania. This report contains tables showing the number and types of governmental units in each of the sixty-seven counties of the state, and tables and maps giving the population, population density, and area of each county. Data with reference to the population, classification, and location of cities, boroughs, towns, townships, school districts, and poor districts are also concisely stated in this report. The report should prove useful to the legislative commission which is just beginning its study of various proposals for the reorganization and simplification of local government in Pennsylvania.

The Council has also recently republished in mimeograph form the preliminary report

of the Educational Costs Survey Committee of the House of Representatives first issued last summer. A joint committee composed of senators as well as representatives is now studying school costs in Pennsylvania and the problem of state aid.

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**California State Chamber of Commerce.**—The Chamber's "Committee on Better Administration of Justice" has recently published a pamphlet outlining the "crime control" program which it evolved and the results which have been achieved during the first year of its operation.

The "crime control" program consisted primarily of four measures which were adopted as constitutional amendments by the voters of the state at the November 1934 elections. The essential features of this program are: (1) a new method of selecting judges which combines certain features of both the elective and appointive methods; (2) an extension of the powers of the state attorney-general, bringing sheriffs and other law enforcement officers under his supervision; (3) permission for the judge and the district attorney to comment to the jury upon the failure of an accused person to take the stand in his own defense, and for the judge to comment to the jury on the evidence introduced in a case; and (4) permission for a defendant charged with the commission of a felony to admit his guilt when first brought before the committing magistrate instead of having to wait until his arraignment in the superior court.

The educational campaign carried on for the adoption of this program involved the preparation of a forty-page speakers' manual, the mailing of 122,000 digests of the proposals, and of 100,000 reminder cards to as many voters, preparation of newspaper releases for the 300 daily and weekly newspapers of the state, widespread use of the slogan "Curb Crime," and use of billboards and the radio.

The Chamber's present pamphlet attempts to evaluate these measures and to estimate what they have or will accomplish to reduce expenses and increase the efficiency of the courts and law enforcement machinery.

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## MANAGER GOVERNMENT IN PENNSYLVANIA

(Continued from Page 84)

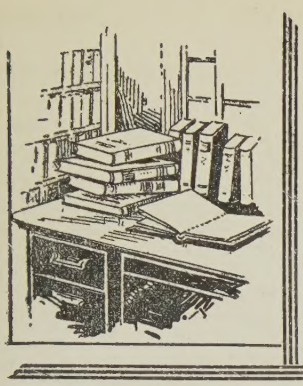
ough clerk and secretary to council for the borough of Clifton Heights, "This form of government (borough manager) worked out wonderfully in this borough but for some unknown reason ordinance No. 204 was passed." This ordinance repealed the one creating the office of borough manager.

This same indefiniteness is found in the cases of Coraopolis, Dormont, and Philipsburg. In Jersey Shore the manager resigned to become postmaster and with his resignation the councilmanic committee system was again put in operation.

### OPTIONAL MANAGER LEGISLATION

Various bills to permit managerial government are regularly introduced into the two houses of the Pennsylvania legislature. Mr. John L. Holmes sponsored a bill to enable boroughs to adopt this type of local control upon a vote of the electorate after a petition of 2 per cent of the qualified voters. Mr. Holmes says, "This bill is approved by the State Association of Boroughs and the State Chamber of Commerce. The backbone of the city political leaders is being broken and the day will come when such a bill as mine will enable all boroughs to have a borough manager."

This prediction has not yet been realized. However, the future growth of manager government seems assured in Pennsylvania and such development will probably be under some plan permitting the adoption by charter instead of ordinance.



# RECENT BOOKS REVIEWED

EDITED BY GENEVA SEYBOLD

**Tax Systems of the World.** Edited by the Tax Research Foundation. Chicago, Commerce Clearing House, Inc., 1935. 365 pp. $15.00.

A foundation stone for the library on taxation is this volume which presents in tabular form a summary of taxation throughout the world. Arrangement of the information by states and countries and also by types of taxes makes it particularly convenient for reference.

In the year 1935 in which the legislatures of forty-seven states met in fifty-six sessions, a large amount of tax legislation was enacted in this country. This, as well as the laws and changes enacted by Congress is included in the sixth edition of "Tax Systems of the World." Other new material includes tables covering state estate and gift taxes, property tax exemptions, taxation of motor carriers, the revenue produced by various types of taxation, and limitations on taxation. Two hundred tax authorities collaborated to make this source book possible.

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**Government and the Consumer.** By Beatrice Pitney Lamb, Washington, D. C. The National League of Women Voters, 1935. 51 pp. 25 cents.

The problem of protection for the consumer in the fields of the public utilities, railroad rates and securities for investment, has been given a certain amount of attention by the government. This pamphlet focuses attention upon the need for similar consumer protection in the direct purchasing of goods at retail stores. It is an attempt to bring to the attention of the average buyer the steps which have so far been taken to prevent him from being exploited by the producer and by creating a consumer-consciousness, to pave the way for more effective buying in the future.

The study urges the necessity for a fundamental shift of emphasis in public thought from the interest of the producer to that of the consumer, who after all forms the largest group in the economic structure. Consumer rights in regard to the quality, quantity, and price of goods must be considered seriously in the future. The protection of quality can be treated much more adequately through the establishment of a mandatory grading system of all classes of goods under federal supervision.

Another essential step is the development of a coördinated government program of consumer information in regard both to quality and price. Moreover, there should be consumer representation in the administration of government policies toward industry and agriculture. Heretofore little account has been taken of buyers as a definite group whose demands should be considered. They, themselves, are to blame. They are the weakest group in society because they are not conscious of their unity. Only through organization can effective protection be achieved.

Besides its suggestions for the future, the pamphlet is of value for the general survey it gives of the steps taken so far by the federal government to insure fairness to the consumer. Though admittedly inadequate, they are more comprehensive than is ordinarily believed. L. S.

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**Greater Safeguards for Public Deposits.** By Martin L. Faust. Chicago. Public Administration Service, 1936. 45 pp. 50 cents.

Existing safeguards for public funds are of

little real value, and real protection for the bank accounts of state and local governments would involve reform of the entire national banking system, according to this study. In the meantime, however, it is possible for governments to improve the safeguards for public deposits, as well as mend their own financial practices.

Professor Faust criticizes eight different devices which governments have used as safety checks for public deposits. Certain other methods of safeguarding public funds now in use he considers better. He points out that the state-owned banks of Delaware and North Dakota weathered the economic crisis without jeopardizing the safety of their public deposits, and expresses the opinion that this scheme deserves further trial, "perhaps by coöperative action on the part of local governments within a region or by individual states."

In his opinion federal reserve banks could properly be used as depositories by all governmental units. He advocates, too, that the present federal insurance of public deposits up to $5,000 be extended to cover public deposits in full, the cost of additional insurance to be assessed against the total amount of public deposits insured.

Finance officers should learn to time receipts and expenditures properly to reduce the necessity of deposits; and they must be able to forecast in accurate estimates for months in advance the cash requirements of their governmental units.

The author adds that "in both state and local governments adequate provision for audits, abandonment of the system of elective treasurers, and the creation of an integrated financial structure permitting effective centralized fiscal control would tend greatly to eliminate the hazards that jeopardize the safety of public funds in banks."

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**State Administration in South Carolina.** By James Karl Coleman, New York. Columbia University Press, 1935. 299 pp. $3.50.

How can a state increase its administrative efficiency? An answer is provided in Dr. Coleman's proposals for the reorganization of state government in South Carolina. As a study of the evils inherent in a loosely coordinated administrative system, and as a practical and detailed outline of a method through which these evils may be abolished, this monograph will be of decided interest to all concerned with the problem of state reform.

The general plan proposed by Dr. Coleman follows the recent trend in certain other states and in the federal government toward a centralization of responsibility in the hands of the chief executive. Although administrative inefficiency due to diffusion and lack of integration in the governmental structure is not peculiar to South Carolina, the author feels that it has here reached undue proportions. The overlapping of agencies has resulted in a duplication of effort, unnecessary expenditures, and a structure so complex that neither the general assembly nor the public understands it.

To counteract such conditions, Dr. Coleman advocates a fourfold process of integration, which includes an increase in the administrative function of the executive, the departmentalization of present scattered administrative units, the establishment of an effective system of financial control, and the coördination of activities through a cabinet system.

Under direct control of the governor, according to the plan, would be thirteen administrative units. The heads of these departments would be appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate and would carry out the policies of the governor through technical staffs of state service employees selected by means of examinations.

Dr. Coleman urges that public officials be appointed instead of elected, and advocates a short ballot as an imperative step toward the simplification of the machinery of popular control. In effecting economy, the executive type of budget is presented as an obvious necessity in a scheme of state reorganization. The governor, as the agent who carries out the plan of the budget, should have control over its formulation.

An arrangement for the revision of the revenue system is based on confining the sources of taxation to income, property, and business, and the rejection of the sales tax. In the field of industrial relations, Dr. Coleman recommends an industrial commission to arbitrate labor disputes. He further advocates an expanded public health program, and a coördination of all welfare institutions under a department of welfare. L. S.

**Municipal Finance Legislation.** By Irving Tenner, Municipal Finance Officers' Association. Chicago, Public Administration Service, 1935. 44 pp. 60 cents.

In this pamphlet is given a "bird's-eye view" of the measures passed last year by the state legislatures attempting to regulate and improve fiscal conditions of municipal and state governments. Following a brief summary of the outstanding legislation concerning taxation, new sources of revenue, accounting and budgeting, municipal pensions, and tax and debt limitations, the author classifies the various acts under subject and state headings. Each is reviewed in four or five lines.

Conspicuous among the new laws are those providing debt specifications, tax and expenditure limitations, new sources of local revenue, old-age pensions for municipal employees, and relief for the heavily indebted municipalities.

A. F. J.

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**Business and Government.** By Charles C. Rohlfing, Edward W. Carter, Bradford W. West, and John G. Hervey. Chicago, Foundation Press, Inc., 1935. 605 pp. $4.00.

So many and varied have been the recent steps in the rapprochement of business and government that the authors of this volume, three faculty members of the University of Pennsylvania and Dean Hervey of Temple University, have thought it advisable to make extensive revisions in the text, although the second edition appears only a year after publication of the first. It is intended primarily as a college textbook drawing together from the fields of government, public finance, applied economics, labor legislation, and money and banking what is pertinent to a clear understanding of the significant points of contact between business and government.

Discussion of important 1935 legislation and decisions of the United States Supreme Court affecting the New Deal augment the material presented in the first edition. There are new chapters on public utility holding companies, governmental competition with private enterprise, highway and air transport regulation, public expenditures and business, government control of credit, and social security.

**Training for the Public Service.** Report and recommendations of a conference sponsored by the Public Administration Clearing House. Edited by Morris B. Lambie. Chicago, Public Administration Service, 1935. 49 pp. 50 cents.

As the duties of public officers become more technical and involved in the wider aspects of political and economic life, increasing thought is being given to the necessity for specialized training of those who wish to build a government career. Special schools, bureaus, institutes, and departments for this preparation have sprung up in various parts of the country, but there has not yet been developed a generally acceptable plan for study. It was to consider the best types of such education and training that the Public Administration Clearing House sponsored a conference last summer at Princeton.

An isolated university or college program for public service training is unwarrantable, the conference concluded. Such training can and should be given within the already existing divisions of the institution. It is possible to equip young men and women for ultimate high administrative positions only by presenting them with the general and technical problems of government as part of a general course designed to fit them for association and work with educated men and women in every walk of life.

Following a period of broad undergraduate study, the conference recommended graduate study in several specialized fields relating to government. During this time an "internship" in some department of government under the supervision of the educator coöperating with the administrator would give the student an opportunity to apply his learning to actual situations that he may later have to meet alone. An apprenticeship as a regular employee of some division would be the next step at the end of which the "career" student would find his foot on the first rung of the ladder. His education would be continued through "in-service training."

A closer relationship between the universities and the government with respect to placing and advancing these career students is necessary if the plan is to work, the conference pointed out.

A. F. J.

**State Control of Local Finance in Massachusetts.** By Royal S. Van De Woestyne. Cambridge, Harvard University Press. 178 pp. $2.50.

Originally written as a thesis for a doctorate at Harvard in 1932, Dr. Van De Woestyne's study is chiefly valuable as a concise, careful description of the historical development of state control of local finance in a state in which extensive control over nearly all phases of local municipal finances has developed over a long period of time. Massachusetts local governmental units have been and remain strong and independent but intelligent coöperation on their part has aided in the establishment of an unusually fine system of uniform statistics of local finance administered by the state. The coöperative spirit has been evidenced, too, in regard to administrative reform. Widespread, sound practices of municipal auditing and accounting have been brought about by it together with the "moderate policy" pursued by the state.

The certification of town and district notes has proved a convenience to the municipalities and a powerful force in controlling indebtedness and improvement of financial methods. Early efforts at debt limitation beginning with the municipal indebtedness act of 1875 were evaded through unsound practices and resort to special legislation to permit borrowing outside the limit. While some relief was obtained through new laws in 1913, the author still finds the municipal borrowing policies too liberal especially since 1920 and special legislation still a problem. Control of ever rising municipal expenditures, now a problem of the greatest importance in Massachusetts, has not been attacked directly by the state. Local finance committees which were authorized in 1900 in general have been valuable. This problem must be met by the local governments and taxpayers themselves with the state acting in an advisory capacity. Through "education, persuasion, and counsel" the state tax commissioner though limited in power in this respect has "played a large role in bringing about a fair degree of effectiveness in both assessment and collection of taxes."

The financial measures of the last few years are not dealt with in this study since its concern is with the lasting progress which has been made in Massachusetts and emulated in other states.

**The Steadyflow Traffic System.** By Fritz Malcher. Harvard City Planning Studies, Vol. IX. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1935. 91 pp. $1.00.

When Fritz Malcher, Austrian municipal engineer, was formulating his system of traffic regulation by street design he coined two interesting words.

One was "greenage." That was Mr. Malcher's term for the vegetation on the middle strip which bifurcates his neat geometric highways. Safety demands that we separate streams of traffic flowing in opposite directions by middle strips of such a width that the biggest car can turn between the roadways. This neutral zone can be used as parking space, though "the ideal solution from the planner's and the driver's point of view would be, of course, to eliminate parked cars entirely from the streets, and thus make all middle strips, improved with greenage, available for the use of pedestrians."

Middle strips are nothing new. "Their value as a boundary separating two roadways is widely appreciated, but . . . their great importance to cross traffic is not being realized at all."

That is where the second minted word applies—"steadyflow." It means uninterrupted traffic, sans right-angled intersections, sans stop and go lights, sans police officers, sans any traffic control save what is necessary for the safety of the pedestrian. By constructing the middle strips so as to permit no direct traffic intersections at crossroads, one steadyflow lane will have an "economic effectiveness" two and a half times that of an ordinary stop-and-go lane.

In view of current anti-accident campaigns, this careful "crystallization in design of the interacting considerations of traffic and of street form" has immediate as well as historical importance. The principles of the steadyflow system have been published before. But the Harvard School of City Planning felt that Malcher's work and worth demanded "as consistent and complete a statement of his ideas as could be made."

They were right. For Fritz Malcher was not another traffic expert. He was a traffic artist.

H. B.